PRAZIMENE:

A

ROMANCE.

Translated into English

By *R. B.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO
Mrs. A. H.

BEauty, Madam, has so much efficacy over the generality of Mankind, that it extracts pity from the Hearts of the most Savage and Barbarous, when in distress; nobler Accomplishments or more perfect Beauty, never was any Person endowed with, than the unhappy Prisoner; yet all the Advantages of a most illustrious Birth, an Education [illegible] proportionable, with the most admirable Perfections and Qualifications, joyn'd with a most dazling and surprizing Sweetness both of

To Mrs. A. H.

Youth and Beauty (which renders your Sex Divine) could not protect the Innocent, the Unfortunate Prazimene, from feeling the severest Strokes of Fortune. Whither therefore shall she fly but to your incomparable Self for pity? You, Madam, who with all Advantage may vie with her in all things but her Miseries. She implores your charming Goodness to take her under your Wings; there she is sure to be sheltered from the further Frowns of her sad Fate and Destiny; whilst I beg leave to be permitted to be the eternal admirer of so many Virtues which shine so eminently in your whole Composure, and to subscribe my self

Madam,

Your most humble Servant,

A. H.

PRAXIMENE.

THE Amorous *Semiramis*, being sensible that her Designs would never prove successful, by those Inventions which with much Curiosity she had endeavoured to make use of; and that the Testimonies of her Friendship, and the Transports of her Flames were always received with an equal indifference by *Meliphrata*; and that it was as impossible for that Eminent Courage, to suffer himself to be daunted, by the menaces and threats of Revenge, as to give way to the Charms of Unlawful Pleasures, judged rightly, that the Excess of his Vertue, was the real Cause of his Disdain. He loves, said she, with a deep Sigh: but *Praximene* being Lost, he loses his Glory; his Courage, which can give or snatch from the [illegible] is the cause which makes him [illegible] vours, which I have so [illegible] in him; since it is not likely, that he should hitherto preserve a Fidelity, from which he can expect nothing but Misfortunes: He [illegible] Triumph compos'd of Soldiers, to one of an Amorous Queen:

Cruel *Meliſtrate!* Where ſhall a Virtue, ſo ſecure as yours, be found? Are you afraid, that a little Inconſtancy will Raviſh from you the Quality of a Hero? That God, which we adore, and from whom my Spouſe draws his Beginning, is he not as well Fam'd for the Diverſity of his Amours, as by the Grandeur of his Power? and will not his Example ſhake your Conſtancy? Ah *Meliſtrate!* I am Inſenſible, as well as you, my Careſſes proving you always Cruel, and your Diſdain proving me ever in Love. Theſe Words pronounc'd with an exceſs of Paſſion, were ſo often Interrupted by Sighs, that ſhe ſcarce knew what ſhe ſaid; ſhe ſpoke enough, but her Judgment never followed her Complaints; but when ſhe pronounc'd the Name of the Generous *Meliſtrate*, then ſhe came to her ſelf; and that which ſeem'd to have put an end to her Tranſports, began again with greater Force by the Violence of her Thoughts. Thus this Great Princeſs, ignobly ſubmitted to the Aſſaults of an Unjuſt Love, and thoſe Brave Actions which made her Adored by the Subjects of the Great *Ninus*, were now changed into quite different Employments, and againſt which, till then, ſhe had teſtify'd a wonderful Averſion; the cloſeſt Pleaſures were now preferr'd to the Tents of War; the Retirements of Walks to that Marvellous and Daily Obſervancy ſhe rendred to the King her Husband, and the great Deſire ſhe us'd to have to appear Arm'd, at the Head of the

the Troops of that Victorious Monarch, to partake of the Glory of his Conquests, gave place to Infamous and Tragical Intentions. Her Eyes no longer Shin'd with that Chast, and yet Triumphant Lustre, which was wont to infuse Courage into the most Effeminate Soldiers. That Gravity, which alone was capable of the Consideration of the Great *Ninus*, was now no longer to be seen, and that Negligence, which she affected as an Inseparable Companion of her Chastity, was changed to a Curious Setting off of her Person, and her Hair was set forth with so much Artifice, that it was taken a Notice of by all the World; she was covered with Powder, but not with that of a Camp. In a word, the Washes, of which till then she knew not the Use, the Gaudiness of her Apparel, which till then she had abhorred, and all other her behaviour, as to her Words and Actions, Free or Restrained, Natural or otherwise, were so observ'd and remarkt, that they were imitated by all, although approved by none: Strange Alteration, from one extream to another, but scarce worthy of Blame, in comparison of those prodigious Effects which succeeded them: Why should I complain, added this Princess, to her former Sighs? and why should I so meanly Despair? since it is easy for me to sweeten the Rigor of my Destiny: Let us embrace Unhappy *Semiramis*, the only means our Passion In-

ſpires us withal; yes, Deareſt *Meliſtrate*, Heaven and Earth ſhall be made ſenſible, to what a Degree my Paſſion is rais'd; and altho' neither can Learn it without Horror, yet they ſhall Suffer it; if my Affection cannot move you, altho' my Deſigns are Secret; if to treat with you, as other Women do, is to render me diſagreeable to your Eyes, and render you Inſenſible to my Love, I will quit thoſe Vulgar Methods, and Act ſo Publickly, that it ſhall become the Wonder of an Empire, the Diſcourſe of all Mouths, and the Admiration of the whole World: So that if Ambition be the End which you propoſe, that ſhall be ſatisfied in the higheſt manner, provided my Paſſion be but anſwered. Pardon me, Oh Glorious *Ninus*, if this Fatal Diſorder, obliges me to Extinguiſh the *Hymenian* Torch, to Illuminate this other, which burns ſo violently my Heart: Pardon me, I ſay, if the Violence of my Deſires obliges me to attempts upon your Life, and do not refuſe me this unheard of Favour, ſince I cannot be Happy, but by your Death: reſign to my Happineſs the Remainder of your Days: It is certain, that in an Age ſo advanc'd, Death cannot be but Advantageous, ſince it will put an end to ſo many Triumphs; for who knows, but that one Fatal Overthrow may fully them, who can aſſure you, that your Empire will always be compos'd of ſo many Kingdoms,

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Generously Conquered by your Arms? Ah! Great Prince, it is much better to Dye soon, and Gloriously, than to Live longer, and behold the Decay of thy Grandeur and Honour. It seems, as if this Affection, with which my Heart is so repleat, was a necessary Inspiration, for thee to put a Glorious End to so many Conquests: In a word, thou art going to be Indebted to me for thine Eternal Renown; insomuch, that it will seem, as if thy Satisfaction and mine were both joyned in their Effects, altho' infinitely different in their Causes: But after all, Great Conqueror, how often have you protested, that you Preferr'd my Will and Pleasure to your Victories; how often have you said that you would purchase them at the Price of your Blood? Now then it is that I challenge your Performance; your Royal Faith ought exactly to be observ'd, especially where freely engag'd and not compell'd: Take therefore in good part the fatal Resolution I have taken, die therefore to make me live; and since the certain Security of thy Fame is in the compass of my Love, permit me to deceive thee, since my Crime renders thee Immortal. This unheard of Design being taken, the Cruel *Semiramis*, burnt with desire impatiently to see the Execution, her Thoughts were wholly employ'd on the Means to compass it; nor did she ever repent of her so fatal Resolution: At length her Passion not admitting

mitting to defer it, ſhe began that Scene of Horrour with Sighs and Tears. *Ninus*, who was wholly taken up in State Affairs, of which the Wars was his chiefeſt Care, gave himſelf not time to ſearch into the occaſion of the Change he obſerv'd in his Queen: He had taken Notice of her different way of Living from what ſhe was us'd to do, but never imagined the Cauſe: The Teſtimonies ſhe had ſo often given him of a pure and ſincere Affection, the Hardſhips ſhe had undergone rather than to abandon him to the Hazards of the Wars, and that general indifference ſhe had made appear for all things which did not immediately concern him, were to him ſufficient Proofs of the Sincerity of her Love: He flatter'd himſelf ſearching for Reaſons to excuſe her Alteration, of which he ſaw the leaſt part, and ſeem'd to be an unhappy Inſtrument and Forwarder of his own Misfortunes, that it was to render her ſelf ſtill more agreeable to him, confeſſing that thoſe affected Ways which the wretched *Semiramis* practis'd, to be more taking than that charming Modeſty with which ſhe us'd to receive his Embraces. In a word, that which ought to have rais'd his Suſpitions, was that which charm'd and blinded him the moſt, and which alſo gave way for that Paricide which that deteſtable Princeſs committed, whoſe blind Paſſion clouded the Royal Diadem, and inſtead of meeting with a return of that Love which ſhe expect-

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ed, rais'd nothing but Contempt and Hatred in the Breast of *Melistrate*. To execute her bloody Intentions, she made use of the common Arms belonging to her Sex; she feigned a Melancholy for some Days, and suited her Actions so well to it, that her Sadness, accompanied with Tears most artfully shed, intermixt with Sighs as cunningly vented, seem'd to proceed from a Cause quite different to what it produc'd. The great *Ninus*, who was not capable of receiving a more perfect Joy than what he drew from the Satisfaction of this ungrateful Woman, could relish none whilst her Eyes were bedew'd with Tears, and her Countenance languishing and pale, he endeavour'd by all imaginable means to divert her, and fearing to become importunate, should he sollicite her to tell the cause of her Sadness, he forbore for some time, altho' he was very desirous to know it, to the end that he might put an end to it: *Semiramis*, nevertheless, wishing for nothing more than to find that great Desire in him to be inform'd, to the end she might have an opportunity to forward her Design, so subtlely dissembled; that she seem'd to lay a Constraint on her Grief and Sadness, on purpose, as it were, to hide it from the King: This Counterfeit was so well play'd on her part, that at length she compassed that deplorable end which she so much expected and long'd for. The unhappy *Ni-*

nus could no longer forbear (one Day as he met her walking in those ſtately Gardens of *Babylon*) to aſk her the Cauſe of that Alteration which he perceiv'd. I have, ſaid he, for ſome time ſuffered a Diſcontent, which has innocently been procured me, and which, nevertheleſs, creates to me inſupportable Griefs and Anguiſh. Is it not juſt, Madam, that I ſhould find out the Cauſe of an Evil ſo extraordinary by all thoſe ways I can think of? Yes certainly, my Lord, (anſwer'd ſhe) quite ſurpris'd, (and as if juſt come out of ſome deep Meditation) your Health and Intereſt being that of the whole Empire and mine, I have great reaſon not to permit you to neglect it; If then your Majeſty has found out what will bring you Eaſe and Comfort, ſpare not thoſe things which even are Sacred, if they are neceſſary to your Preſervation. Ah Madam, reply'd this weak Prince, blinded with his Love, there is no need for ſuch Remedies, you alone can Cure me, ſince it is your Sadneſs alone which diſcompoſes me: You are not ignorant that you and my ſelf making but one all, it is very difficult for the one to be in Trouble and not the other to be ſo likewiſe; the Remedy therefore that I have thought of, is the urgent Deſire I have to know the Cauſe; it is the only Eaſe which I can find; tell me therefore what oppoſes your Mind, and if it is not in my Power to reſtore you to your wonted Temper, I ſhall then ſay that you had reaſon to hide

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it from me, leaſt the Regret of not being able to ſerve you ſhould caſt me into Deſpair: but ſhould it be ſomething which is difficult, but yet poſſible to be done, I ſhould have reaſon to reproach you, that your Affection is too full of Reſpect when it requires of me nothing but what is common, and what any other than a Monarch would be willing to perform. Hold my Lord, ſaid ſhe, diſcourſe not to me on a Subject, the bare Imagination of which cannot be but very diſagreeable; break it off I beſeech you, leaſt my Vanity ſhould make you alter your good Intentions: It is ſufficient that it is what has reduc'd me as I am; but to ſay to what it pretends, is what, with your Leave, my Mouth ſhall never declare: This Secret then, ſaid the Prince, muſt be of marvelous Conſequence, ſince you are ſo reſolved to conceal it. Acknowledge at the ſame time that you deſire to ſee me in perpetual Torture; tell me that my Death is one of your greateſt Wiſhes; all which you, in fact, do in hiding from me the Cauſe of your Sadneſs: But why; Ambition you ſeem to acknowledge is the cauſe of your Change; ſurely it is eaſy to put an end to your Diſcontent, if you will declare in what it conſiſts. The faireſt and greateſt part of the World acknowledge me their Sovereign, but if you deſire that our Power ſhould extend it ſelf farther, the two other parts of the unconquer'd World ſhall, e'er long, ſubmit to our Empire; Say but only that the

Propoſition is agreeable to your Deſire, and you ſhall forthwith behold the Effects: And if this is not enough, I will undertake yet more for your Satisfaction, cauſing you to be Proclaimed Queen of the Univerſal World; I will not ſo much as be Partaker with you in the Government thereof, you ſhall be Sovereign in all Reſpects; and it will be more pleaſing to me to obey you, and ſee your Content, than to Reign my ſelf at the expence of your Joy and Satisfaction. There giving leave to ſome Sighs, he beheld her with Eyes full of Love, and not being able after what manner to make appear to her, that in her alone conſiſted his Happineſs, he went beyond all meaſure to let her know that his Words and Actions were parallel: No, ſaid he, I will not ſtop at theſe things I have mentioned, I will proceed farther, and raiſe your Ambition to that degree that perhaps it never was before. When I ſhall become the Conqueror of the World, I will order that you ſhall be the only Deity of their Temples, and the Object of their Sacrifices: And to move the People by Example, I will begin the firſt to offer Incenſe and Vows to you, ſo that whoever ſhall be wanting to render you thoſe juſt Devoirs, ſhall be held doubly Guilty, joyning the deſpiſing of my Commands to the diſreſpect of the Deity: After this can I leave any thing undone to fulfil your Deſires? therefore now you have Freedom to diſ-

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cover your Discontents, propose them then Madam, and believe that nothing but Impossibility it self can deprive you of the hopes of having it effected. Alas, answer'd that perfidious Creature, (seeming to be sensibly touch'd with that excess of Love, but in effect more obstinate in her pernicious Designs) It is not from this Day that you begin to give me to understand that you have not for me an ordinary Affection; that glorious Day to me in which you became sensible of my Charms, you was not only contented to give back again to the *Ascalonites* that Liberty which by Right of War they had lost, but you enlarg'd their Priviledges to that degree, by the weak Influence of my Eyes, that from being a Conqueror you became a Captive: These were, great King, the first Proofs of that Passion which you felt for me; but since that, what have you not done, and what is it that you will not undertake for my sake which you have not? I know that you never propos'd any thing executed; however, altho' my Vanity is not rais'd to that degree as to desire the Performance of such great Proffers, but that less ought to content it, yet I dare not discover it to you, considering that I have ever been unworthy of your former Favours, and therefore shall still remain more unworthy of these latter. Thus that shameless Princess, in seemingly opposing the great desire which the King had to learn the occasion of her Grief, endeavour'd to raise his

his Curioſity to the utmoſt Extremity, to the end that his Sollicitation ſhould make it appear the leſs Criminal, and whatever paſſionate Expreſſions he made uſe of, yet ſhe would never condeſcend to diſcover the Secret to him; until finding, that from his Entreaties, he began to be in real Paſſion, and to uſe his Authority, ſhe judged, that then was the proper time to effect her deſign: Well then, (ſaid ſhe, letting fall ſome tears) ſince you have laid your Comands on me, I will endeavour to Obey you; but let your Majeſty; conſider, if you pleaſe, that it is that which obliges me to commit this raſhneſs; and altho I have been guilty in having it ſometimes in my Thoughts, before I diſcovered it to you, yet the Reproach will be ſooner caſt upon you than me; ſince I have always had as much Diſcretion to Conceal it, as I have had Preſumption to conceive it; and that after having judged me Criminal, you have not only Forgave the Conception of thoſe Thoughts; but have likewiſe reſolved, that I ſhall proceed to the Execution of them: There is no need, that your Arms ſhould add the remaining Kingdoms of the World to the Empire of *Aſia*, to ſatisfy my Ambition: There is no need that Love ſhould render you an Idolater, nor that you ſhould communicate your Adoration to the whole World on this Occaſion: But (there laying her Hands over her Eyes, as to hide the Change which appeared) permit me to ſet alone upon the Throne

Throne, and as Sovereign, to diſpoſe of Affairs of State. Do not believe, continued ſhe, with more Aſſurance, than ſhe had before made appear, that it is upon any Deſign, that I would hide it from you: I do preſume, ſuch is the Harmony in our Affections, that what is pleaſing to me, cannot be diſagreeable to you: Inſomuch, that how Important ſoever may be my Deſigns, I would not make Choice of a more Faithful Companion for the executing thereof, than my King and my Spouſe. You know very well, Dread Sovereign, and I am going to ſpeak it, more for your Glory than for any Vanity, I dare pretend to from thence, (knowing that it is Impoſſible to be your Queen, and not be Endued with more than Ordinary Qualities) that I have appear'd, Woman as I am, as much above your Generals in Valour, as my Glory has always been beneath yours: Nevertheleſs, I find my ſelf left out in the Management of Affairs, whilſt thoſe, who have nothing more recommendable in them, but the quality of being Men, are Partakers of your Secrets, and have the Advantage of Commanding: It is this, O Victorious Prince, which troubles me, and it is in this that I agree with them, who in the Utmoſt of their Praiſes, ſaid aloud, that I had the Heart of a Hero in the Shape of a Woman; but I will add further, and ſay, and one that is as capable of Governing in the ſame Capacity, as any of your Statesmen, or Generals. Permit

mit then (Invincible Monarch) that a few Hours put an end to a vaſt Ambition: Let me have in my Hands, for ſome few Moments, the Reigns of your Sway and Empire, and give your ſelf the Pleaſure, to ſee a Woman make all the other Kings upon Earth Bluſh at the Sovereign Command of one Day: It will be a Memorial, both Advantagious to you, and Glorious to your Empire, when your Nephews ſhall learn, that the Reign of the Great *Ninus* had produc'd Women worthy of the Sovereign Authority, and drawing thence an Admirable Conſequence of ſo wonderful an Action, ſhall ſay, how Excellent and Great were the Men of that Age, ſince the Women had performed ſuch Noble Actions: But above all, you will reſtore Joy and Satisfaction to my Mind, the Sadneſs of which has created yours; you will gratifie me with the greateſt Proof, that your Friendſhip could honour me withal, and you will render your ſelf ſo much the more conſiderable, by the Compariſon which ought to be made of the Wife to the Husband: But if you ſhould deny my Requeſt, promiſe me to endeavour to blot it from your Memory, to the end, that I may not joyn to the Shame of a Refuſal, an Apprehenſion of Fear to appear before your Majeſty, for having deſired what you thought fit not to Grant, and was diſagreeable to you. What needs, ſaid the King, (having appeared very attentive to her Prayer) theſe Perſwaſions? do you make uſe

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of them to Obtain what you ſo ardently deſire? do you not know, that I had conſented to it, before I was Informed what it was? Perhaps this Requeſt had not been ſo favourably received, had I been Maſter of leſs Love and Affection; but having for *Semiramis* ſuch powerful Inclinations, I ſee but by her means, and have Triumpht over ſo many Nations, but for Love of her: Let her therefore, Enjoy if ſhe pleaſes the Fruits of my Labours, and her own; but it muſt be, without having any thought which ſhould any wiſe Trouble the Enjoyment of it; ſince, knowing it to be an Addition to my Glory, I am ſo far from offering her the Poſſeſſion with Regret, that I conſent to it with as much Ardour as your Deſires. Yes, Dear *Semiramis*, I will Aſſemble all my Grandees, and Power, and by a Celebrated Reſignation of my Authority, I will Eſtabliſh yours, in their Preſence, for ſo long time, as you ſhall think fit, to ſatisfie your Generous Ambition: The Term of one Day will ſuffice (anſwered ſhe, very readily) to Satiate this Diſorderly Paſſion: But, Great King, (continued ſhe) with an Action more Compos'd and Reſerved) to what Height will my Boldneſs carry me: I ask of you a Favour, the Obtaining of which is ſcarce to be Imagined, and nevertheleſs, inſtead of endeavouring to govern it, according to your Will, I my ſelf Preſcribe the Limits; I am the Petitioner; and yet give the Directions how my Requeſt ſhould be granted; my

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Raſhneſs is too much to bear, and I Condemn it as juſtly, as I have with Confidence made it manifeſt to you. Altho' *Ninus* felt within himſelf ſome Alteration, which ſeemed regugnant to his Promiſe, and that his Heart, by Unuſual Throbbs, ſeem'd to Contradict theſe Aſſurances, which he had given, yet his Love notwithſtanding carried him above all thoſe Aſſurances and Conſiderations, which thoſe extraordinary Motions, had Imprinted in his Mind; ſo that having ingaged his Promiſe, he had no other Thoughts than of keeping it; he laid one Hand on her Mouth to oblige her to Silence, and immediately joyning his own, teſtify'd by a Language interrupted with Kiſſes, that he would no longer hear her pronounce thoſe Words of Vanity and Baldneſs; and that he was too Glorious in having a Wife who anſwer'd as well to the Greatneſs of his Affections as to that of his Courage and Grandeur: Thoſe Careſſes were ſo far from ſoftning the Heart of that perfidious Queen, or that by their ſoft Impreſſions any glimpſe of Humanity could touch her Soul, that ſhe look'd on them as importunate; ſo that without the Art of diſſembling, of which ſhe was an abſolute Proficient, ſhe never had occaſion to make any Shew to the Prejudice of her Deſigns. Thoſe Lips were ſtill to the great *Ninus* as infectious and poyſon'd Fruit, which was all that he could gather from thence; and more he could not have met with from his moſt cruel Enemies; and with-

without loosing the Impression of those deadly Sweets, left her with a Resolution to give her all the Proofs of a most wonderful Complaisance. He caus'd his principal Officers and Ministers of State to assemble, and by a Discourse which he made to them, and which rather seem'd to proceed from his own Will than from the irregular Desires of the Queen, did declare to them the design he had to honour her with the most Eminent Marks and Demonstrations that were in his Power. This was a fair Prologue to his Misfortune, and to take off from the pernicious *Semiramis* all the Suspitions, which the desire of Reigning might have caused that illustrious Assembly to have censur'd her for, had the over-credulous *Ninus* given them to understand that he came to that Resolution only for her Satisfaction, and to gratifie her desire. They were all seiz'd with Amazement, and whatever this great Monarch demanded, there was not one, who in the doubt they were in, was capable of framing an Answer to his Satisfaction: At length the Prince propos'd, and came to a conclusion by himself, and, as if his Will declar'd by an absolute Authority, which he was forc'd to make use of, had given Liberty to their Tongues, they almost all seem'd to applaud his Intentions. Already the Report was got amongst the People of the strange Design the King had taken; every one gave his Opinion, some one way, some another, without suspecting or imagining

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the ſtrange Event it was to produce; but all in general were ſtrangely ſurpriz'd to hear that they were going to loſe their Prince, without being depriv'd of him by Death, or that ſome powerful Enemy had rob'd him of his Crown, after having generouſly conquer'd him. The Day being appointed on which he had reſolv'd to diveſt himſelf, never to be reinſtated, Diſpatches were ſent throughout the whole Empire, to command all the Grandees to be preſent and aſſiſting at this moſt wonderful Action; and before the limited time was expired, one might behold in *Babylon*, where nevertheleſs altho' the Sight was dazled by ſuch Magnificent Preparations, yet the Mind remained in ſuſpence of what would be the Effect of ſo ſtrange a Reſolution. Whilſt things are innocently preparing for the ſtately Funerals of their King, and that the Throne is adorned with the richeſt Ornaments to ſerve him for a Bier, the cruel *Semiramis* on her part gives Orders, that ſhe may not fail in her Enterpriſe, without all Controverſy, that at that time ſhe not only was ſenſible of the Attacks of ſome Repentance, but likewiſe of Inſpiration, which endeavour'd to divert her from executing her Deſigns: She appear'd nevertheleſs conſtant and firm in the Action, wherein the Glory ſhe reap'd only ſhew'd her Infidelity; and as if that was the firſt Aſſault that her Conſcience withſtood, ſo likewiſe was it the laſt: Let him die, ſaid ſhe, to ſatisfie my Love; which certainly muſt

must languish so long as this Husband proves an Obstacle to it, and which will receive new Vigour by his Death: At these Words, with Demonstrations equal to her Courage, that is to say, with Commands full of Violence, with Actions discompos'd, and a Countenance enflamed, she gave a Charge to *Clerzane* to bring to her Closet *Merzabane*: He was one of the Grandees of *Assyria*, who, tho' suspected by his Prince for those Qualities of which he was a Master, yet was supported, or to say better, was powerfully rais'd by the Queen, and to whom she had always testified a great Kindness ever since that fatal Employ of which the growing Love of his King to *Semiramis* had held him to be worthy; thither then he went as soon as he had received her Commands, and observing in her Countenance an extraordinary Emotion, became fearful and apprehensive equal almost to his Crimes; with Justice he might have expected a due Punishment, which his wounded Conscience was continually sensible of; but now his Fears were groundless, since the Princesses Commands so well suited with his wicked Inclinations. *Merzabane*, said she to him, I shall not make use of a set Speech to you, mingled with Intreaties, I shall make use of my Power, and command you to execute a thing where your Interest may answer my Satisfaction: there making a Pause, she beheld him, which on a sudden she continued, I ask at your Hands the Death of *Ninus*, to render me happy, and

and to clear those Doubts with which your Mind seems to be agitated: I have pitch'd upon you to be the Executioner of this Undertaking, as the only Person who is strictly oblig'd to serve me: I perceive you tremble, and that you will no sooner be awakened out of your Astonishment, than that you will intreat to know the Cause; but be assured, that your inquiry into any thing, but to be instructed in the Means how to compass it, will infinitely lessen the Obligation. Then telling him that she had obtained of the King the absolute Command for some Hours, and that it was by that means she pretended to effect her Design. She continued in these Words, I have not exacted from you any Words extraordinary, to give me Assurance of your Fidelity; I have not engag'd you to keep it secret should your Courage fail in the Enterprize, nor have I made appear by one single Word, or Action, that I distrusted *Merzabane*, well knowing, that the Honour I do him, in reposing that Confidence, and, putting it into his Power to serve, is a sufficient Reason to render him faithful. Observe then, (if you have Resolution enough to obey me) Rouze up your Courage, and if it answers not, to what the Attempt requires, or else behold a Woman execute what she only propos'd to you; since after your Refusal, she will have need of Admirers, more than of Sharers with her in so great an Action. The Corrupted *Merzabane*, during this Discourse, had time by

by degrees to recollect himself: He began to consider, that in two parts of her Discourse, she seem'd to hint at, and mingle her Satisfaction with the Interest he ought to have in the Death of the King. This Thought gave him to Understand, that the Wicked *Semiramis*, did as good as tell him, altho' she did not altogether explain her self, that it would be for his Advantage, if she Surviv'd her Husband; that if he should miss of her Favour, he would have both the Gods and Men against him, and that it was she alone protected him against both; after having considered then, that by the Execution of so unheard of an Undertaking, he should find a support, he resolved to perform it, and serve himself, in serving such a Monster. Madam, answered he, I shall not call to my Assistance, the Proofs I have always given you, of a Fidelity and Equality, of which, perhaps, you cannot find in any of your Subjects, throughout the whole Extent of your Great Empire: I hope it may suffice, to protest to you, that such has been my Obedience for your Service, that I never so much as Consulted my Reason, but Blinded have gone on, and in Answer to which, your Bounty has always been Unlimited towards me; permit me then a little to Complain, and that I may have the Liberty to say, that either you have entirely forgot it, or that your new Designs deprives you of all other Remembrance, whilst that alone possesses your Thoughts. But, Great Queen, without

without trifling away of time upon thoſe Teſtimonies of Sorrow, which cannot be diſpleaſing to you, permit me to diſſemble it, and that in Lieu thereof, I let you ſee an Extream Deſire to know what Order *I* ought to obſerve, to Satisfie you, to the end that by Proofs altogether apparent, you may be oblig'd to own that my Fidelity never had any other Object, than your Self: The Queen extreamly ſatisfi'd, in hearing that the Reſolution of *Merzabane*, concurr'd with her own, Sweetned the Severity, both of her Words and Actions. To Engage him the further in her Service, ſhe declared to him the violent Inclinations, which the Merit of *Meliſtrate* had raiſed in her Breaſt, and paſſing from thence to other Secrets; diſcloſed to him her Mind with as great a Freedom, as if ſhe had been talking of his own. At length ſhe told him that the day on which *Ninus* ſhould declare her on his abſolute over Dominions, ought to be the ſame, in which ſhe hop'd to put an End to that Power; and from having a Companion to reſt it ſolely in her ſelf, puting *Merzabane* in hopes of the *Aſſyrian* Crown. She was forc'd to have recourſe to Flattery, to ſooth his Vanity, in order, throughly to obtain that of him which ſhe had been ſo long aiming at, without giving nevertheleſs any thing, but bare appearance; and without downright promiſing any Share or Part of the Sovereign Command. She ſpoke after that manner to him, although ſhe conceal'd the Sincerity

of

of her Mind from him, but in that ſole Point; leaſt the Jealouſy of ſeeing an unknown Perſon, as *Meliſtrate* was, Seated on one of the moſt ſplendid Thrones in the World, ſhould diſſwade him from obſerving his Promiſe, or at leaſt ſhould leſſen the Deſire, which he had teſtified with ſo much Fervency and Affection for the Execution of that fatal Undertaking; He then ſolemnly proteſted to her that he would be the firſt that ſhould give the fatal Blow in the Breaſt of his King, and promiſed further that he would fill the Court ſo full of his Partiſans, that ſhould it come to open Force, they ſhould be able to Save and Defend themſelves: At laſt the Day equally deſired by all, but upon different Accounts, arriv'd, and although all the Preparations were carried on with an extraordinary Magnificence, yet what was neceſſary to render the Ceremony compleat, was wanting; a certain Sadneſs ſeem'd to reign every where, which was of that ſort, which ſeems to foretell ſome unhappy or fatal Accident, inſomuch that whatever glittering of Gold and Jewels did appear, it ſeem'd to be Tarniſh'd for want of a certain Gaiety and Mirth, which uſually attend ſuch Ceremonies. In fine, the great Hall of the Palace, where this celebrated Action was to be perform'd, was open, and all plac'd themſelves according to their reſpective Qualities. The Throne was compos'd of a Matter ſo excellent, that in value, it exceeded the richeſt of Metals; inſomuch that ſo extraordinary an Embelliſhment had

been

been to no purpose, had not the Royal Majesty, which set thereon, added to it as a Superfluity, rather for a Mark of his Grandeur, than out of any other Necessity. In fine, it was enrich'd with so great a quantity of precious Stones, and they so admirably set and ordered, that it represented the Victories and Conquests of the great *Ninus*; without being able to discern, whether it was the Matter or the Diamonds, which fram'd those pleasing and agreeable Objects. The Ascent to the Throne was by ten Steps, covered o'er with so rich a Tapistry, that it suffices to set forth the Excellency thereof, in saying, that it was a Foot-cloth alone worthy to serve the greatest Prince upon the Earth. The Hall covered over with Hangings of Gold, continued in divers Colours; the Representation of those Conquests of which the Throne compos'd the Beginning, and the Sun shining through from several Places, upon the least Reflection made it so Dazling, that one could with difficulty behold them. There were Seats covered something different from the Throne, which were more raised, where the Kings, which were Tributary to the *Assyrian* Monarchy, used to seat themselves; and when at any time they were present, although they were with their Crowns upon their Heads, yet they held down their Scepters, in Token that they acknowledged a greater and supremer Power than their own: And although they had the Title of Kings, yet had they not the Disposal and free Order-

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ing of their Kingdoms. After them, but as distant from theirs, as they were from the unhappy *Ninus*, the great Officers of the Empire were plac'd, and all along in order, the principal Officers of State. About this Royal and Majestick Assembly, were the Princes Guards in so great a Number, that they compos'd eight Ranks, adding by that means to the august Majesty of such an Assembly. The great *Ninus* mounting the Throne with the Crown, and Scepter, and Royal Collar, (Ornaments which since have past away to the *Medes* and *Persians*) when the Empire of *Assyria* suffered their first Revolutions, he perform'd it with a Grace so Royal, that he had attracted thereby the Looks of all the Beholders to himself, but not the fair but perfidious *Semiramis* appear'd on his left Hand in the same Dress, in which she had perform'd so many heroick Actions, and thereby interrupted the Course of their first Astonishment to create a second yet much greater. This Garment, which she had newly retaken, and which she had neglected ever since that Day, wherein *Meliftate* had innocently rendred her Criminal, was neither properly a Man's Habit, nor altogether proper to her own Sex; but seem'd to be composed of both; and to say in one Word, it came very near to that under which the *Amazons* are described to us, but so rich that it was hard to be valued. Her Hair which hung loose added a marvelous Luster, but what was more extraordinary, was the

Cruelty of her Design, with which her Eyes and Actions seemed to agree. As soon as the King was Seated, she took her place, contrary to her Custom, on the last Step of the Throne; and as her Presence created a general Silence, he made a Speech, neither long nor short, but so well Concerted that it fully declared his Mind: The greatest and chiefest Part of his Discourse was in Praise of the counterfeit Virtue of his Queen, of which he spoke more advantagiously, than of the Bounty of the God's towards him; insomuch that in a few Words he made an admirable Panegyrick; he began with that unhappy Instance, which he term'd the dearest of his Life, from which he delivered himself with so much Passion, when he mentioned the incomparable Qualities of the Queen, that he thereby discovered the Sincerity of his Heart, and with an affected Eloquence, reckoning all those several Conquests in which she had shared, he Treated her in Terms of Heroick, Invincible and Inimitable; he was not content to number the Combats she had undertaken, the Battels she had gained, and the Assaults where her Virtue and alone Conduct served for Engins to reduce the Cities to his Obedience, but likewise applauded that active Vigilance, that wonderful Assiduity and Application, the dispising of Accommodations, and that most commendable Severity and Discipline she ever practised in the Camp; the Soundness of her Judgment, the nightly Watchings and the daily Toils were

were highly repeated; and to say all in one Word, he gave such lively Praises to all her Actions both in general and particular, that representing things as acted and perform'd just in the manner he spoke of them, he gave them I know not what, which was more capable of raising Admiration, than they had been just at the Moment that they were perform'd. At length he concluded, that for an acknowledgment worthy of so Signal and Renowned a Vertue, he could think of no other means answerable to it, but to yield to her for some time the Soveraign Authority. At these words he Conjured them that heard him, to consider, that if so many Perfections centring in a Prince, they would not esteem themselves happy to become his Subjects; and thereupon having before them what he had Premeditated, he added, that the like Qualities meeting in the Person of the generous *Semiramis*, they ought to be the more satisfied and ready to obey her, in that it was a miraculous Thing and altogether Divine, to see a Woman so accomplish'd; and that paying their Obedience to things Supernatural and Wonderful, they ought to hope for and expect a Government more agreeable and perfect. Thus having mingled many Truths with a great many Flatteries, and spoke of his Queen many admirable and glorious Things, from the very time of her Infancy, but very shamefull for her, having since so distressingly Degenerated from them; he commanded

them all to render to her their Obedience and Duty equall to what their Allegiance obliged them to shew to him. He added that he would exempt none from the Command he had made, and moreover, that if there was any Prerogative, more particular belonging to the *Assyrians* Crown, which he had never put in use, he intreated them to put his fair Queen in Mind of it, to the End, that if she was limited to a Time in the Function she was going to take upon her, yet she might not be limitted in her Power. At that offering to rise from the Throne and give place to his Queen, and at the same time, to give her the royal Ornaments in consequence of her Authority; The perfidious *Merzabane*, to cover, under a Pretence apparently Just, that the execrable Attempt he was going to make, and for the better executing of which, he had that day engag'd a Traitor who that day mounted the Guards, rose and protested that he was too faithful a Subject to his Majesty, and too affectionate to his Countrey, to consent to a Change so extraordinary; saying, that Revolutions in Matters of State, were a little too dangerous not to grant him Liberty to explain his Thoughts upon an Action which was without Example, that he ought not to be the first to speak his Mind on so Strange an Act, but having observ'd that none, to whom it did more lawfully belong to declare their Opinions upon it, had not the Heart to give a necessary Remonstrance thereon; he had rather

ther commit a Fault by his Duty and Affection, than to commit a greater through Fear or Complaisance; that he hoped the Queen would pardon him, if he most humbly requested her Majesty to exempt him from the number of those, over whom she was to exercise an absolute Power; and because he would not lessen her Authority the less by so small a Remissness, he would retire from Court during her short Reign. It was with much Pain that *Ninus* listned to his Words, since from the very beginning he refus'd to lend an Ear, but the Consequence of the Action seeming to permit a Liberty altogether particular, He seem'd to hear intirely out the Speech of *Merzabane*, and although he plainly by his Eyes made appear he was displeas'd, notwithstanding he answered with much Sweetness: But when he drew near to the End of his Answer, he chang'd both Tone and Speech, and Swearing not only by the Fire (a Duty the *Chaldeans* had a particular Reverence for,) but by *Adad* and *Atergatis*, he did it on purpose to put an End to these Remonstrances, that others by his Example might presume to do; and adding that it was not then only, but at any other time, those words should not have been receiv'd, commanded him not to leave the Court, but to pay his Obedience to the shameless *Semiramus*, equal to what his Birth oblig'd him to. At these Words lifting his hands to his Crown, and rising a second time from his Throne, he plac'd it on

his Queen; then aſcending it again with her, he put on her the royal Collar, and gave her the Scepter, which was reſted on a ſtan enrich'd with Diamonds. The Eyes of the Court during this Action ſeem'd to have attracted to themſelves all the Functions of the other Senſes, ſo powerfully were they taken up with this Sight, ſo that there was not one but was afraid ſo much as to wink with their Eyes, leaſt they ſhould loſe the leaſt Circumſtance of it, nor would they ſcarce give themſelves the Liberty of Breathing; and the Senſe of Hearing had likewiſe its Part in this great Ceremony, in ſo much that the Quickneſs and Vivacity the one had to obſerve all was chang'd into the Deſire of the other to hear all. Oh ye Kings which are raiſed, and who hold notwithſtanding your Dependance on this Empire, ſaid the deveſted *Ninus*, and you Princes who from thence take your Original, and you Lords who maintain the Grandeur of it, you may at this time behold upon the Throne of your King, one in whom are all the Excellencies and Wonders met, which ever was ſince the Foundation of this Monarchy: You may in her behold Vertue it ſelf, ſince it is your Cuſtom to repreſent her under the form of a Woman. In one Word, you there ſee the admirable *Semiramis*, whoſe bare Actions have often made you ſuſpect your own Judgments as well as your Eyes, in being partakers in her Glory; pay her theſe Duties and Obedience

bedience which appertain to the Quality she now possesses; Swear to her the same Faith and Allegiance, which your Fathers heretofore have swore to my Predecessors, and which you have likewise paid to me; and during the little time her Reign may last, observe for her so perfect and intire an Obedience, that if such should be her desire, that it may even exceed what appertains to the God's themselves. In the Interim, most illustrious Assembly, consider me but as a private Person, since that after having resign'd to her my Power, I would not reserve to my self the least Priviledge, which should seem like Authority, but only remain amongst you as one of the least of you. In ending these Words he took that place the Queen had quitted, whilst in order the Kings, Princes, Lords and Officers of that great Empire were Sworn to that Fidelity, which is due from Subjects to their Sovereign. *Semiramis* received them with a Countenance very grave, but not with that Assurance; for sometimes she chang'd Colour, and without all doubt she was considering that the time was come, in which her unjust Flames were going to be discovered. The Ceremony being ended, she would undertake to speak, but she remain'd as if her Tongue stuck to the Palate of her Mouth, which surpriz'd the whole Assembly in seeming to have much to say, and yet could express nothing. This Attempt she made four or five times; at last, My Lords said she, I shall not question nor

call in doubt that Faith, which you just now have sworn to me; I know you are too generous to go back from your Allegiance, which ought to be inviolable after having promis'd it in so solemn a Manner: Therefore it is, that after having barely told you with aggravating particular Circumstances, I esteem it to be an excess of Cowardice and Shame in this Prince, (continued she, pointing to *Ninus*,) to have so easily parted with his Crown, to satisfie the desires of a Woman; and that he is unworthy of the Throne he has just now quitted, since you are Witnesses that he has preferr'd his Passions to your Interests: I have now a Right to command, by vertue of the Power which has resign'd to me, and the Faith to which he you have all sworn, that by draining his Blood, you therein wash away his Ignominy, and the just Resentment you ought to have: Purge the Throne of this infamous Reproach, and that looking no longer on me for the future as a Woman, know, that by this just Command, if I have been capable to discover to the meanness of his Heart, and to make you Revenge the Affront that he has offered to you, I am infinitely more worthy of Governing this Empire than himself, and for whom I have acquired Glory and Renown. There she was silent, and seeming to animate by her Actions, all those to whom she directed her Discourse. The pitiless *Merzabane* followed by a Band of Traitors, whom he found as easie to be corrupted as himself, ran with his

his Sword drawn towards the unfortunate *Ninus*, and without giving ear to those mourning and complaining Accents which he uttered, thrust it into his Body. Thou hast forc'd us, said he, in committing this execrable Parricide to pay a blind Obedience to one, who more worthy than thy self, does fill the greatest Throne upon Earth; certainly we have a great Reverence for thy Commands, since having such regard to those Duties which thou hast oblig'd us pay to her, we have had no Ears for these Complaints which thou pretendest to make against what she has enjoyn'd us: Die, then since it is not permitted a Prince to go from his Word; for in hindring us from executing her Orders, it would not only be refusing the Request thou madest to obey her, but a Breach of our Faith which we have just Sworn. This Discourse was intirely spoke, but confusedly heard; for at the same that this sacrilegious Person had gave the first Blow to his Prince, all those who followed him, run him in at a thousand Places. Of all the most unnatural and cruel Acts which History makes mention of, there is not one which ought not to gain Belief, of this prodigious Truth, which is now set forth, can but find a free Introduction into the Belief of those that hear it. To betray a Prince, or make an Attempt upon his Person, are Accidents which many times the Corruption of an Age may produce. But that a just Prince should lose his Life at the Feet of his Throne,

amidſt of his Guards and in the Arms of his Subjects, and that horrid Sight not excite or ſtir them up to revenge it, is not to be believ'd. Whether then it was, that for ſome ſecret reaſons unknown to Mankind, the Gods approv'd of the Deſign, or that a ſtupendious Aſtoniſhment, had ſtupifyed the Souls of the Beholders; none offered to defend the unhappy *Ninus*. His Blood guſh'd out upon his Murtherous Queen, and yet no effect thereof appeared, although at that time perhaps a great many deſigns were afoot, and it was ſo far from appearing to be an abominable Act, that it rather ſeem'd to be a Triumph prepared for her. The miſerable King ſtill reeking in his Blood, of which his Veins were not quite emptied, his Heart ſtill beating, and his Wounds yet warm, the wicked *Merzabane* ſecured the ſhameleſs *Semiramis* amidſt the Guards of the Deceas'd, who receiv'd her with applauſe. The People having heard what was acted at the Palace, met in whole Troops to reaſon, according to their Cuſtom, on ſo extraordinary an Accident, and they waited with Impatience to ſee the End of it: When the Heralds appeared in all the Quarters of *Babylon*, who to appeaſe them in caſe of a riſing, gave Largeſſes in the Name of the Queen. At firſt they cryed in a melancholick Tone, *Ninus* is dead; But preſently diſtributing abroad the Largeſſes, they continued with an unanimous Voice of Joy, Long Live the Queen *Semiramis*: If this new Way of proceeding

ceeding surpriz'd at present the People, and thereby hindred, what by a longer Consideration of the one and the other, might have happen'd: It was without all doubt prevented by the extraordinary Bounty of the Heralds; for their Thoughts of what was past, was immediately chang'd into praises of the Last. In the mean time the Grandees of the Empire who had innocently assisted the Murther of their Sovereign, who quite confus'd, were retired to wait with Wonder the Event of so bloody an Enterprize, and who transported with fear, lent their Ears to the least Noise, soon came out of their Surprise, when they saw the People from whom they imagined would proceed the greatest Disturbance, without any Appearance of it. They disposed themselves to follow the present Fortune, and to the End that they might not by a longer delay of their Duty draw upon themselves the ill Will of her, who the Fates by unheard of, and uncommon ways, had now given them for Sovereign, went each in particular to confirm the same Oath of Fidelity, which in general before they had made. Thus those who sigh'd in their Hearts, to see their most sacred Laws violated, the Royal Throne stained by an execrable Murther, and the Blood of the grand *Ninus* crying for Vengeance before the God's, and Men, agreed with them, whose guilty Minds seemed to breath no longer than under a Government which protected them. Now the wicked *Semiramis* is possest

of

of that Authority which she so ardently wish'd for, she sees her self adored by the People, and worship'd by the Princes her her Subjects, insomuch that now she hopes for all, and apprehends nothing: But however, whoso takes Fortune for a sure and certain Foundation, are often deceiv'd, and that one happiness is rarely attended with another. Hitherto this cruel Queen is satisfied with her Success: All things are quiet and in Peace in *Assyria*, and whatever Order is carried in her Name, or what Alteration she makes in the Empire, all is receiv'd as coming from a Legitimate Power, the several Governments being continued to the one, and the several Charges assured it into the other. In a word, the greatest number being content and satisfied, she now endeavoured to grasp her utmost desires. She was not desirous to live for ever absolute, but would have been content to have submitted to her dear *Meliftriate*. The Method she had taken upon the Account of this detestable Action was prudent enough, to hinder that the Murther of the King, though known to all the Empire besides, yet should remain a secret to that great Person, because she would not that he should know it, without letting him at the same time understand, that what she had done was for the Advancement of his Grandeur; she would that in offering him the Crown, reiterate the offer of her Affections, and render thereby the latter acceptable by the Gift of the former;

for which reason she had ordered Guards to be plac'd on the Frontiers, to stop those Packets, who against her Intention would undertake to send him the News. In Truth it had been very difficult to have hindred, that at last the Report had not reach'd his Knowledge; nevertheless as it was altogether her Desire, that he should not remain Ignorant of it, but that he should know of it as she had determin'd, she dispatch'd what required diligence, and in less than four days was in a Posture to make what alteration she pleas'd in the Empire, *Oronclide*, Son to *Merzabane*, was the Person she made choice of to carry this News: He was Couragious and diligent, and withal was possessor of several other good Qualities, which without all doubt had made him pass for a Person accomplish'd, had he not been a Branch of so foul and pernicious a Tree. It was in fine, his great Defect the being Son to *Merzabane*; and as Example often either adorns or blasts Mens Manners, so what he ever bore his Eyes in the Person of his Father, had oftentimes made him Derogate from his true Courage, but in such a manner that it was perceivable, that that Disorder proceeded from a principle of Virtue. This Cavalier being then chose by the Queen for an Instrument to execute her last Design, she sent to speak with *Merzabane* to concert it first with him; to the end to engage him the firmer, she made him extraordinary Caresses, and Beginning her Discourse with

the

the Fidelity of the Father, she continued it with Praises of the Son; So that by that means *Oronclide* became Inclinable to what before his Reason seem'd to blame and oppose. He ingag'd him at length in the Service of this unjust Princess, and as his thoughts were aspiring, he burnt with desire to see himself in a Capacity to execute her Commands. You must carry this Letter from me, said she, in giving him a Packet, to our General *Melistrate*, who you must inform of all that is past; you may likewise add what you may judge fit to confirm to him my Affection; but omit not to tell him that I have taken the Crown of *Assyria*, only to make a present thereof to him; yet do not believe *Oronclide*, that these Promises shall engage me to a Performance; it is a thing of too great a Moment to divest my self thereof so easily: But his vain Hopes may blind him, and without doubt, the Expectation thereof may bring him to Court, where I shall have all the Advantage that Love and Power ought to give me over such a Man: That if his Virtue should prove too secure, or rather, if he should make his Obstinacy, pass for his Virtue, and should refuse so advantagious an Offer, make use of that Power which I have given you, and of which you carry apparent Signs, which none can doubt: Bring him with you, by virtue of those which shall accompany you, after having constituted *Clazimene* in his Place. When he shall be

before

before me; perhaps I may make him sensible, that the disdain, which would settle an ordinary Woman, ought not to find me insensible, and that an excess of Love being changed into an excess of Hatred produces such strange Effects, that its Consequences are no other than a perpetual Tragedy; insomuch that if my Affection has already perform'd Wonders uncommon and unheard of before, my Resentment will find no less a Power. These Words being ended, *Oranclide* was presently furnish'd with all things necessary for his Expedition, to take away from the Head of his Army a General, he being so enjoyn'd by the shameless Queen; and to dispatch it with the greatest Assurance, he took with him likewise half her Guards: Going thus from *Babylon*, he arrived at length on the Frontier of *Margenia*, a Province then under the Government of *Batria*, where the generous *Melistrate* was fighting, as much for the Glory of the *Assyrians*, as to satisfie the Justice of his Resentment. Of two Commanders which compos'd these Troops, the last was the most agreeable. He wish'd all the length of the way, that this excellent Person might not be shaken in his vertuous Resolutions, to the end that he might make a Prisoner of the Wonder of the Age. It was a generous Ambition, which animated him, yet nevertheless the Gods approv'd not of it, being full of Injustice, but protected the Innocent by the same Hand which would have oppress him. As soon as *Oran-*

clide

clide arrived, *Meliſtrate* cauſe his Armour to be taken off, which he had wore all that day in expectation of a general Battel; he was received by him with all that Reſpect and Affability, that a Man of an extraordinary Merit ought to have and as ſoon as he underſtood that he was come upon ſome important Deſign, he gave him all the Liberty and Time to diſcourſe in private which could be deſired. *Oronclide* having made him a Compliment, preſented him with the Letter of *Semiramis*, which he could not receive but with an unuſual Emotion; but becauſe he would not remain in that Diſorder, which in continuing hinders the effect of ones Judgment, he recollected his Senſes, and with an Active Eye read theſe Words:

Semiramis to *Meliſtrate*.

At length you ſhall be ſatisfied, and that Glory of which ſo religiouſly profeſs your ſelf a Votary, ſhall be entirely yours without hereafter having it divided between you and him, whom your Arms made Triumph; forget the Art of Crowning others, and gather no more Lawrels than to Crown your ſelf. The time is come, ſo that that ſecret Influence you have had over my Heart, my Love and Courage have created that which you ought to exerciſe over the *Aſſyrians*; fortifie not your ſelf with reaſons to make you incredulous; It may ſuffice to know the exceſs of my Affection, to judge of the greatneſs of my Undertaking. *Ninus* is

dead

dead, and is it *Meliſtrate* has cauſed it by the hands of *Semiramis*. But why ſhould my Letter diſcover to you ſo Strange an adventure, ſince have I may other deſigns. Learn then *Meliſtrate* this Enterprize from the Publick Voice. Let the Aſtoniſhment of a whole Empire, and the Murmures of the whole World inform you of it; ſuch is my Deſire, ſince at the ſame time it will become undeniable Witneſſes of my Paſſion; But alas, to what extremities do I ſee my ſelf reduc'd! All Bloody with the Murther of *Ninus*, I addreſs my ſelf to the Murtherer of *Semiramis*, as if it were likely, that this cruel Courage could be mollified: At leaſt dear Conqueror, if I am not acceptable of my ſelf, let me become agreeable by virtue of my preſent: Conſider me not a Princeſs in Love, but as a Queen that is altogether abſolute; who tenders to you the Sovereignty over her, and her Dominions. Nevertheleſs, let not this Reſolution ſo eaſie and neceſſary ſerve for a Colour to deceive me; conſider on this Subject, but do it quickly; condemn my Undertaking alone, but applaud it join'd with my Love. Thus, dear *Meliſtrate*, you will be raiſed to that Point, to which your merit ought to have called you long ſince; and thus your *Semiramis* being rendred happy, will defie the Gods to trouble her Repoſe and Content, ſince being in the Armes of her *Meliſtrate*, ſhe will imagine her ſelf in an *Aziloms*, which they dare not violate without being unjuſt, and without aſſaulting

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ing a Hero who is as worthy of being deified as themſelves.

Meliſtrate confus'd to the utmoſt, let fall the Letter before he had read it out; never had any thing that had at any time happened to him, cauſed ſuch an Amazement as now he found himſelf in; he bluſh'd, and then grew Pale at one and the ſame time, and a Chillineſs coming over him, he Trembled through Grief and Rage; at length coming to himſelf, he took up that fatal Paper, and calming his troubled Mind read it over ſeveral times to comprehend the Senſe of it; but finding it to anſwer his firſt Apprehenſion, he was ſeiz'd with ſuch a Horror, that he would not allow himſelf time to conſider on the Circumſtances. Gods, cryed he, in beholding *Ormelide* with an angry Brow, and tearing the bloody Letter in a thouſand Pieces, Is it poſſible that the greateſt Conqueror of all Ages has loſt his Life by the moſt ſhameleſs of her Sex! Shall I give faith to an Action ſo diſtant from Nature, and ſhall I believe that ſo fair a Sex could be guilty of ſuch deteſtable Deſigns! But good Gods, can I yet imagine that after having committed ſo infamous a Treaſon, you would permit the Author to triumph in it! ſo much that beſides the Murther of her Husband and King, the cruel *Sentiranis* Blaſphemes againſt your Power. God's ye know whether I conſented to it, or if my Sentiments reach'd this Sacrilegious Act; ye have ſeen how I have ever rejected

those

those infamous Propositions, which this Monster of Impurity have often made me. You know how much in regard to her my respects have been secure, and my Civilities full of disdain, and yet a slight in me so Legitimate, has not extinguish'd those unjust Flames of her Love; and instead of pouring her Rage and Hatred upon me, as despis'd Lovers commonly are us'd to do, she has caused him to feel its effects, who for having too indulgent an Affection for her, gave her the Opportunity to execute her Designs. Ye Protectors of Innocency, revenge this Parricide which obliged the Earth to murmur against Heaven; shew that you have permitted it for Reasons unknown to us. But for other Reasons apparent that you will punish that execrable Wretch who had fram'd so horrible a Resolution. In a word, revenge the Offence committed against you, in the Person of him, who did not only belong to you as your representative amongst Men, but as drawing his Birth from you; punish this Sacrilegious Affront which this Woman has committed, in daring to make a Comparison of the worthless *Melistrate* to your Supream Majesties unheard of Blasphemies, monstrous Impieties. That Thunder, which ordinarily falls on the Heads of the most Sacrilegious, was not fram'd for you, other infinitely more rigorous ought to be forg'd to answer the Enormity of such an Action. And you the most infamous of Men, continued he, speaking

king to the Messenger of this fatal Writing, has the Heavens created you so Illustrious to become the Minister of so much Perfidiousness; one of so eminent a Birth as you are, and yet one that is greater by his own brave Actions, could you so little understand your self, as to become on a suddain, either the Murtherer of your Prince, or the Accomplice of his Death, and not satisfy'd by so foul an Action, but must ou your self spread the News of it in all Parts? Alas! Should this be true, as you oblige me, to believe, some powerful Charm by Violence has forc'd you to comply with what heretofore your generous Inclinations made you detest. Recollect your self *Oronclide*, and by an extream Satisfaction, testifie an extream Repentance; let us joyn together as well to ask the Reason of this Parricide, as to divert that Storm which ought not only to reach the wicked and shameless *Semiramis*, but you also if you further persist in this detestable Service. I do not easily Repent, said *Oronclide*, or rather I never Repent, for that I never undertake any thing but what I have known before, if what I undertake is reasonable; so that after my Resolution, all Advice is indifferent to me. But let us leave these Discourses of Faults and Repentance to the Ministers of our Gods, to whom alone it belongs to Counsel and Advise on those Subjects; and let us speak of the principal Occasion of my coming hither: Thereupon changing his Tone, and assuming one more

more respectful, he continued; The Death of the great *Ninus* is a thing done, so that all your Resentment will not serve to recal him; to be afraid of that punishment which you threaten the Authors of his Death, I can say, with a great deal Reason, that I dread it not, since without excusing my self, I knew nothing of it, till after the Blow was given; and that the God's being just would distinguish from the Guilty, a Person who never consented to so barbarous a Design, much less for the Peril than for the Injustice. Can you blame me for siding with her, whom the general Consent maintains in the Throne? No surely being assured, that the Voice of the People is the Voice of the Gods; and that if they will punish the Queen, they will at least permit her till then to remain the Governess of the Empire, otherwise they would have suffered all *Assyria* to rise up against her, and I should then have Sided with the juster Party: Let us submit then to their immortal Wills, and leaving the things as by them ordained, let us conform to that Obedience which is there due. As for you, it is without Controversy that you will gain more than all the rest of the *Assyrians*, since the Affection of the Queen obliges her to offer that, which altho' a Stranger, yet the greatest Prince amongst us dared not to pretend to: you have but to return Love for Love to make you the greatest King upon Earth. What, interrupted

Meliſtrate, if you have not degenerated from that Vertue, of which you have given ſo many Proofs, in clearing your ſelf from the deteſtable Conſpiracy againſt the Life of the great *Ninus*, will you now degenerate in executing the infamous Commiſſions, that this ſhameleſs Princeſs have given you? Will you ſerve her in that mean Quality, which thoſe ſervile Perſons, whoſe Fortunes alone depend upon the Court, are forc'd to ſubmit to? This is no more anſwering what I have propos'd, than it is the Queen's Letter, haughtily reply'd *Oranclide*, riſing from his Seat; and ſo far are you from it, that for Anſwer you have nothing but remonſtrances and injurious Words. Ceaſe, I beſeech you, theſe Exclamations, and reſolve me on the Point, to the end I may finiſh what I have in my Power. Traytor, cry'd the tranſported *Meliſtrate*, think not that your pernicious Perſwaſions ſhall be capable to alter the Purity of my Deſigns: That Crown which you offer me on the behalf of your deteſted Miſtreſs ſhall never oblige me to conſent. What ſhall I eſtabliſh my Greatneſs on the Loſs of ſo good a Prince? What ſhall I ſtain his Bed by thoſe fatal Embraces, the deſire of which it ſeems has caus'd his Death; rather let me periſh a thouſand times, than be one Moment unreſolved what I ought to do. Return, infamous Wretch, return, and tell the Queen, whoſe wicked Ambaſſadour you are, that ſhe may loſe her hope: Tell her boldly that I will Side with the Gods, and

and that I will ſerve as a Torch to inflame the whole Univerſe againſt her. If they have thought fit that againſt my Inclination I ſhould prove the innocent Cauſe of the Murther of the great *Ninus*, they have likewiſe determin'd, that I ſhall be by my own conſent, the Revenger of the unheard of Crime committed on his Perſon. *Oronclide* having but very ſlightly perſwaded *Meliſtrate*, for fear leaſt he ſhould at laſt have yielded to the Queen's commands, in private would have applauded ſo generous as well as a juſt Refuſal, had it not been ſeconded with ſome outragious Words, which had ſo powerfully nettled him, that he became inflam'd with Anger. He made no anſwer to the latter Threats; he did put his Head but out of his Tent to call his Attendants, who waited at a diſtance, and having commanded them to ſeize upon *Meliſtrate*, his Command was executed with ſpeed; but they only made themſelves Maſters of his Body, for his Mind was freer than ever; or rather engaged in a more agreeable Priſon, and ſo had no Part in this new Captivity. *Oronclide* foreſeeing that *Meliſtrate*'s Servants ſpreading amongſt the Soldiers the Noiſe of his ſeizing, would infallibly cauſe ſome Diſorder, if he did not forthwith put a Remedy to it, haſtned to prevent it, he went to the Camp to the chief Captains and Officers of the Army, and having ſent to thoſe which were leſs conſiderable amongſt them, he told ſome, and cauſed it to be told

to

to others, that he had a very special Commission, but that he could not communicate it to them, until they were all assembled at *Clazomene's* Quarters, where he appointed the Rendevous. Although they were very much Astonish'd, not seeing their General, yet they dispos'd themselves to hear. The first thing that *Oronclide* did was to cause his Dispatches to be read, by which they understood that *Ninus* had commanded him to seize upon *Mediarate*, he being attainted of some great Crime, and to conduct him to *Babylon*, to answer to those Accusations which should be objected against him. This Power appearing in its necessary Form to be executed without Contradiction, mightily troubled the Assembly, who had always, in the Person of their General, so exemplary a Fidelity, and so zealously Affected for the Service of the Empire, knew not how to believe what they saw, not giving Credit to any thing to his Prejudice; yet being obedient, suffered him to be in the Hands of *Oronclide*, to do with him what he was enjoyned: Thus the Cunning *Semiramis* had disposed her Affairs, which were to succeed the Murther of the King, that writing to her General as Queen, yet she wrote to others as King; so that if her Letter had not Power enough to prevail with this brave Man to yield to her Intentions; the Command, which under the Name of *Ninus* she addressd to those who had command under him, could not fail of making him fall into her Power: nor had

had she spared for presents, with recommending secrecy to the Guards which attended *Oronclide*, nor did she fail to let them be continued for some time upon the Frontiers, which she had appointed to be there, to hinder the News from spreading to the Army, of her unnatural Action. *Oronclide* to take off all means from any ones taking leave of the Prisoner, least it might thereby be discovered, resolved to part forthwith, after having declared *Clazomene* General in *Melistrate*'s Place, and delivered him his Commission. Taking then leave of the Chiefs, he enjoyn'd them in the King's Name every one to retire to his Quarters, to the end, that they might hinder the Soldiers, of whom the generous *Melistrate* was called the Father, from Munitying to save him. He return'd then to the Tent of that unhappy Cavalier, where finding him bound like a Criminal, the Sight thereof prov'd a Blow, which made no slight Impression in him: In effect, it was very strange to see the most accomplish'd of Men, treated like the most Criminal; but yet what was more wonderful was, that amidst the Confusion, in which apparently *Melistrate* ought to be, his Virtue cast such lively Rays that in spight of all, it triumph'd over his Misfortunes, and sure what Enemy soever, it was impossible that he should not regret the Misery of him against whom he is animated, if he considers his merit. *Oronclide* did not make appear the lively Resentment which

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preſt him, and although the Night was far advanc'd, he departed without taking one Minutes Repoſe. On the way he meditated on the injurious Reproaches which *Meliſtrate* had caſt on him, which exaſperated him, inſomuch that all the Morning following, he loſt that Regret which he had conceived in ſeeing him ſo ill uſed; nevertheleſs conſidering afterwards of the Motives of thoſe outragious Words, his Anger abated ſo much, that he began to be ſenſible of the Juſtice of them; he was aſhamed that he had mingled with a great Enterprize an infamous Piece of Service, and regarding the Words of Traitor and Perfidious, but ſpoken in Reference to the Action, he acknowledged himſelf ſuch as *Meliſtrate* had named him. He has Courage, ſaid he to himſelf, to undertake the moſt difficult Enterprizes, but in acting of great Deſigns to compaſs them by a criminal Execution, is ſhameful: What does it ſignifie to me, to have brought *Meliſtrate* away from the Head of his Army, where none but my ſelf had had the Courage to take him? Since it is true that his Soldiers Fight more becauſe that they are Commanded by him, then for the Service of their Country. If it be to Sacrifice him, to the revenge of an exaſperated Queen, or to deliver him up to her ſhameleſs Embraces, Gods, what have I done, have I lent my Hand to ſuch an ignominious Piece of Cowardiſe? By what ſignal Action hereafter ſhall I be able to blot out the ill Name and

Reflection

Reflection that this will procure me: or how can I wash away this Stain which has thus blasted my Fame and Honour. Pardon my Blindness great Prince, and believe that in seeking to betray you, I have betrayed my self; I will at least follow your Advice, and by that timely Satisfaction, I may perhaps Skreen my Fault from those Reproaches it deserves. At these Words, composing his Countenance as well as he could, he soon overtook his Company, which had continued Marching, whilst he was meditating on so just a Cause; and every one making way for him through Respect, he drew near to the Prisoner, upon whose Face he had no sooner cast his Eyes, but he observ'd an admirable Tranquility and Sedateness. Perhaps, said he softly, and wonderfully moved at so great a Resignation, you believe that I am very much satisfied in having reduc'd you to this Condition; but would it might please our Gods *Melistrate*, that you could see my Heart possest, as it is at present, with that Regret which afflicts it, you would then find, that what I have acted was by Duty, and that for any other Consideration I had never taken it: *Orsaclide*, answered the Prisoner, I make no Judgment on this Action. I leave that to your self, knowing well that if you commit any ill thing, you have this Advantage, not to do it through Ignorance; and for certain I had never murmur'd against you, if I had not known your Value; but being truely sensible there-

of, I found my self oblig'd, without considering any other Interest than your own, to reproach you; When I knew that base Remonstrances were of no Prevalency against the Charms which forc'd your Vain Charm, interrupted *Orasclide*, whose Power is already vanish'd. Surely dear *Melistrate*, my Eyes are now open, and I am obliged to your Constancy for it, from whence I have learn'd, that there is no Duty can oblige us to things so remote from Reason and Virtue; I was going to loose my self infallibly, and that Greatness, to the enjoyment of which I was but just now arrived, had obtained the Title of Honourable, but only amongst those Persons who for Favour flatters: Since in effect, I was entering into a Way full of Infamy, but I have found in the Person of him, upon whose fall I have founded an unhappy Hope, a Tutelar God, who has redress'd my ignominious Footsteps. I will this Night give you some proofs, that from your Pardon I may oblige you to become my Friend. I render you thanks ye immortall Powers, discreetly said the Prisoner, that ye have been pleas'd to reclaim one of your most Illustrious Master-pieces, and to bring him once more to his own natural Generosity, which by the blackest Malice in the World, had made him degenerate. Then on a sudden, addressing himself to *Orasclide*, It suffices that you have such good Intentions, be not concern'd, to find out the means to add a further Confirmation; This Acknowledg-

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ment appears to me so real, and so pure, that even the Effect can be but a Superfluity; I will go, *Generous Oronclide*, and present my self to the unjust *Statira*, and thereby disengaging you from your Duty to her, I will alone suffer all that Punishment she can inflict, rather than consent to her pernitious Affections. I solemnly protest it in the presence of the Gods, and before you, that it shall be to expose, to the whole World, her Incontinencies and Sacrileges, and to exasperate the People, that they might rid the World of such a Monster; that if nevertheless, that so good a Design should be prevented by her Perfidiousness, and it should be rendred void, I shall be satisfied in having undertaken it, although I should execute but little. *Oronclide* had made answer, and endeavoured to divert that difficult Resolution if he had had time; but being arrived at their Inn at the ending of those Words, he forbore till after Supper. To say Truth, *Melistrate* was treated quite different from what he could have expected; for the Guards seeing their Commander less severe became less Insolent, so that he might have said that he was at Liberty, without enjoying of it. *Oronclide* being then willing to shew some proofs of his Repentance, and of that strict Confidence that he desir'd might be between them, after having given such order to his Attendants, as he judg'd necessary, conjured him that from that time they might have but one Bed; and *Melis-*

ſtrate conſidering, that too exact a Civility being affected, does often eſtrange the Will, conſented to it in certain Words, which ſufficiently expreſt how much he eſteem'd that Obligation. This generous Enemy having not forgot in what Manner their Diſcourſe ended upon the Road; to oblige the other to ſpeak, ſaid, you know very well that you propos'd to me upon my arrival at the Camp, where I comitted that great Fault in making you Priſoner to the wicked *Semiramis*, that I ought to retrieve my declining Honour, by joyning with you to ſprinkle the Tomb of the great *Ninus* with the Blood of that deteſtable Monſter; and yet you take a quite contrary way, diſpoſing your ſelf to go and ſubmit to the Hazard and Danger of her treacherous Deſigns: Change generous Prince this Reſolution, and conſider that I will not engage you now in any Enterprize, but what you have already done; for my part I intirely devote my ſelf to it, to the End, that this Revenge may be ſo publick, that the Remembrance thereof may continue to all Poſterity. Is it then true *Orondide*, ſaid *Meliſtrate*, in embracing him, that this day your Sentiments are contrary to thoſe of Yeſterday? Alas, if it is true, How advantagious has my Misfortune been to me? But I commit an Offence in ſeeming to doubt; I moſt certainly believe it, and only am aſtoniſh'd because it is very difficult, that a Change ſo remarkable ſhould happen in ſo little time:

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And since you make your Resolution mine, I swear to you by all I hold most Dear, that is to say by the lost *Praximene*, (there he gave Liberty to a few Sighs which hindred his Discourse,) that I will follow all such Orders as you shall judge necessary for this Undertaking: And I, pursued *Oronclide* with so much Affection, that the Tears burst from his Eyes, and fell upon one of *Melistrate*'s Hands which he held; I swear by your self, as the fairest Example I have to make me love Vertue, that I will give you such Proofs of a Friendship so pure, and an Obedience so intire, that you shall never have any Reason to repent your saving me from a Precipice, into which Ambition had push'd me; and if that is not sufficient, I swear to you by that Fire which we adore, and I fear not thus to confirm to you my Affections; since it is true that the Honour of possessing your Friendship hereafter will become all my desire. *Oronclide*, who found that all manner of Language fell infinitely short of his Thoughts, was contented in few Words to explain his true Sentiments: He ceas'd then to speak, and assuring himself that *Melistrate* was going to return an Answer, was dispos'd to admire him; but he was much surpriz'd at the Silence that Prince observ'd; so that having but two things in his Opinion that could cause it, he wondred at so sudden a Sleep, or at so sudden a Disdain; yet it was a contrary Effect which caused it: The bare name of *Praximene*, which this generous Lover had

uttered, made such an Impression on his Mind, which made him forget himself; his Senses ravish'd by so sweet a Remembrance, abandoned their ordinary Functions, to give Liberty to his Thoughts to act entirely on so worthy a Subject; and this Extasy surpriz'd him so suddenly, that he seem'd to cease to live, or at least that he was fallen under the Powers of some wonderful Enchantment, and most certain it was the only comfort which remain'd in his Afflictions, and by the Assistance of which he had supported the greatest of his Misfortunes: After that he had gratified himself with such pleasing Thoughts for Recompence of such Favour, it self did him the worst Office, that it was capable of: It put before his Eyes that Princess, adorn'd with those admirable Charms, which incessantly accompanied her; it represented her to his View with that Sweetness, yet filled with Majesty, and those innocent Caresses in which she gloried to gratifie her Love; but at the same time it presented her as absent. Most adorable *Prazimene*, cryed he, without thinking of the Answer which he was oblig'd to make, what Sweetness, and yet Cruelty, do you exercise over me at the same time? What say I, alas, could I thus confound those times so different the one from the other? No, I reprove my self with Justice; since it is true, that you have bestowed upon me all that Happiness which exceeds by much imagination it self, without ever having a Design

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to withdraw it from me, and that the Malice of those which have occasioned our Separation, do sensibly make you a Partner in my Griefs: Then changing of Discourse and Thought, he remembred himself of *Orondide*; If you blame this Transport, said he, in embracing him, your may of right do it, since your mind is still master of that Liberty, which mine hereafter must be a Stranger to; these extasies which make me extravagant in the midst of my most serious Thoughts, these Complaints, these Tears and Sighs, which stop me where the continuation is absolutely necessary, testifie what difference there is in my Life, which obeys two Masters, Love and Glory, to yours which never was divided, but entirely submitted to Generosity: But know *Orondide*, that you are in an Age in which without all doubt, you must have been sensible of Love; since then it is of necessity to happen to you, know in good time, that Love is a great good, in Comparison of many ill, and endeavour to let my Example oblige you to be more observant in a Course where the Recompence is uncertain, but the Toyl and Pains most certain; but ought I by a small Testimony of my Griefs, gave you apprehensions of what your ought e're long to follow? No, no, *Orondide*, be not allarm'd at so small a thing; stay to acknowledge the Truth of my Words, by the certain truth of your Torments: Pleasing Torments if they are caused by a glorious Subject, but

adorable if you participate them with her who created them, and do mine. *Oronclide* perceiving by the changing of the Discourse, that he should infallibly lay a constraint upon *Meliftrate*, should he oblige him to retake that which he had but just quitted, would promote it no further. This Complaisant Consideration joyn'd with the Design he had to set his Friend at Liberty, the Execution of which must be perform'd in few Hours, was the cause that he spoke but few Words more, in which he frankly told him what he had resolved to do; he gave him the Good Night; Whether it was that *Meliftrate* was assured of *Oronclide*'s Civility by this last Compliment, or the Toil of so many days reduc'd to the last Point by what he had suffered; and in belief of his Prison, or by the unheard of Parricide committed on the Person of the great *Ninus*, provok'd him to Sleep, insomuch that he only returned the same Compliment which *Oronclide* had just made him. They were in the heigth of their Sleep, if it may properly be so said of Persons whose Minds are disturb'd, when the Prince starting on a sudden, cry'd out he was killed. *Oronclide*, said he, it is done, and the murtherous Queen, who had charg'd you with my Ruin, distrustful of your Vertue, has perform'd by another Hand, what you were to execute. I dye dear Friend, but I dye with regret; for that it has not been in my Power to render you any Service, for so much Affection as you have

have bestow'd upon me; and I dye with despair for not having recovered my *Prazimene*, or not to have reveng'd her death, if that the Gods have so permitted it: *Oronelide* being awaked by these mournful Words, threw himself out of Bed, and running to his Arms cryed out for Lights; he return'd immediately towards *Melistrate*, and asking him, if it was true that his Life was attempted, or if it was not the effect of some Dream? He was interrupted by a delicate sweet Voice which uttered these Words: Is it to you dear Prince, that I have procured a Death, in endeavouring to procure you your Liberty? Could not *Prazimene*'s Sword discern the Body of her Enemy, from that where her Heart resides? Alas! Have I shortned a Life, without which my own will become insupportable? And have the Gods brought me forth from the Dark, where I was retained by Cruelty and Love, to make me re-enter the World by a way so Bloody? *Oronelide*, who was in hopes that *Melistrate* would have answered him, was much surpriz'd, to hear the Voice of a third Person in their Chamber, where he thought they were alone: He was so transported with Fury, that without giving time to hear intirely this Complaining, and taking it for certain that *Melistrate* was mortally Wounded, by the Presence of this unknown, he went strait to the Place from whence the Voice seem'd to come, resolved to lose his Life, or cruelly to revenge the Death of his Friend.

Friend. But *Meliſtrate* having heard the precious Name of *Prazimene*, had ſo much fear leaſt ſome Misfortune ſhould arrive to the Pronouncer thereof, that he likewiſe jumpt out of his Bed, and notwithſtanding the loſs of Blood, and the Weakneſs he was ready to fall into, was ſo happy as to run againſt *Oronclide*, and made him fall: In the Interim, Lights were brought, and immediately the Chamber was filled, as well with the Soldiers of *Oronclide*, as thoſe of the Family. Never was a mournfuller Sight; *Meliſtrate* half dead extended on the Ground, weltring in his Blood, which iſſued out through a deep Wound. *Oronclide* had his Shirt likewiſe all bloody by meeting with *Meliſtrate*, whilſt in the Dark, he went to puniſh the Author of ſo wicked an Attempt, which made them believe that he was likewiſe hurt; and the Unknown, the Sword at his Feet, and his Eyes turned languiſhingly on *Meliſtrate*, who apparently was dying with his Armes acroſs, and a Countenance all bedew'd with Tears, expreſt the mournfulleſt things which alone had been capable to excite Pity, if the extream Beauty of his Face had not already work'd that Effect. *Oronclide* ſenſibly enraged at the loſs of his Friend, was the only Perſon, who reſiſted theſe Charms: Traytor, ſaid he, with a furious Tone, What Demon brought thee hither, to deprive this Empire of the Wonder of Mankind? Infamous Wretch, who gave thee Entrance here? Who

Who inſpir'd thee with the Boldneſs of making Attempts upon the Life of *Meliſtrate*, and reſolution to execute this abominable Deſign? But Villain, my Impatience tranſports me; therefore without anſwering me reſolve to dye, ſince it is impoſſible for me to ſuffer thee any longer amongſt the number of thoſe, whoſe Glory you have extinguiſh'd. There without doubt he was going to pierce through this fair Murtherer, if ſome of the Company had not told him, that it would be much more for Example's ſake, to put him to Death according to the Laws, and by that means oblig'd him to deſiſt: Puſhed on nevertheleſs by an extream Deſire of revenge, perhaps he had oblig'd thoſe who held him to let him go, had not the Stranger, quite deſperate as he was, ſaved his own Life in teſtifying his deſire to dye; he unbuttoned himſelf, and taking up his Sword, which he held by the Point, courageouſly preſented it to *Oronclide*. Act, ſaid he, generous Friend, of the moſt accompliſhed Man upon Earth, as the Duty of a moſt ſacred Affection commands you; pierce this Heart, and puniſh my Action which in all reſpects is Criminal; you will give your ſelf the Satisfaction of revenging the Death of this deceaſed Prince; for if the Effect prov'd to be his, the Intent was addreſt to you; and the Gods did but change the Blow, but not the Deſign of the Murther. What do I ſee, cry'd in confuſion *Oronclide*, ſo ſoon as he had diſcovered by the opening

of

of the Waſt-coat of this unknown, the Boſom of a Maiden? Either my Eyes are Inchanted, or I behold the Divinity of *Meliſtrate*. Oh *Prazimene* is it you! Who being invincible againſt Misfortunes will make the ſame Tryal againſt Mankind? Alas, if that was your Thought you needed not to have made uſe of thoſe Arms we uſually do, nor to take upon you this Garb ſo unworthy of you, for with that which you grac'd ſo much the *Aſſyrian* Court withal, and with thoſe Darts, ſo natural to your Eyes, you have ever gained Victories, which though of another ſort had not been ſo very eaſie to you; but do I not deceive my ſelf, or can the Reſemblance ſurprize me ſo much, to imagine that *Prazimene* is here, when all the Reaſons in the World oblige me to think her far diſtant? Shall I give Faith to this cruel Teſtimony, and muſt I ſay, that abſence has wrought ſuch a Change in her Heart, that from the Miſtreſs of *Meliſtrate*, ſhe ſhould become his Murtherer? Yes *Oronclide* (anſwered ſhe, Sighing,) I am that Murtherer you ſpeak of, but I have made no Wound, the Effects of which I have not reſented, and be it far that this Action ſhould proceed from any change in me, for I came hither, but for Loving too much the Life of the unfortunate *Meliſtrate*; and to teſtifie to him the faithful Acknowledgments, and real Sentiments of my Heart. ſo that in reſpect to him it was an innocent Crime, although to you never to be excus'd. I have already

told

told you *Oronclide*, and I do believe, that you easily comprehend the Sense of a Discourse, which is too evidently explained by this unhappy Accident: But at length, if *Meliſtrate* be dead, why am I not laid hold on, to the end I might make no stay in following him? What, in a time when my greatest Torment was in his Absence, have I endeavoured to put an End to my Life, for the only reason of our Separation, and now that I think my self eternally depriv'd of him, and that I my self, (Oh dire misfortune!) am the Cause of it, Shall not I in Justice enforce my self to follow him? Oh injurious Thought, my hand will never agree with you. In the mean time, they had put *Meliſtrate* again to Bed, and the Master of the Inn having ordered a Chirurgeon to be sent for to stop the Blood, which came out of his Wound, had endeavoured to stanch it, by holding his Hand to hinder a greater Evacuation. Help being come, all drew near to hear what would be the Opinion and Judgment, which was to be given of the Wounded; and certainly by the Sadness of each in particular, it seem'd as if this loss would equally be resented by all in general, if *Oronclide* and *Prazimene* had not made appear an extream Difference, which is often to be obſerv'd between those who are concern'd through the Consideration of Vertue alone, and those who joyn their Interest with it. *Oronclide* regretted the loss of an excellent Friend

and

and *Prazimene* ſigh'd for that of her deareſt Hopes, and although her Eyes were inceſſantly full of Tears, yet ſhe neglected not to be inform'd of the truth leaſt they ſhould diſguiſe it to her; ſo that after that Knowledge ſhe might follow that cruel Reſolution, which her Love had obliig'd her to. But ſcarce had the Chyrurgeon began to ſearch the Wound, when *Meliſtrate* coming to himſelf, gave him not liberty to continue. Yes, ſaid he, (as coming out of ſome profound Muſing) this Blood is yours, and you have all the Right in the World to diſpoſe of it: Delight of my Soul, do not think that you have endanger'd me by this laſt Wound? No, no, it will ever find me immortal, ſince I ſurviv'd the firſt which your Celeſtial Eyes made: It is but my Body you have hurt, my Heart has not felt it; yet there may be danger, that the ſame Heart confounding his former Wounds with the latter which my Body has receiv'd. — At theſe Words he came wholly to himſelf, as he was going to ſay a great deal more, and at firſt beholding himſelf, then caſting his Eyes on thoſe that ſurrounded him, he ſtopt them not until he found out *Prazimene*: Then would he have roſe out of his Bed, to caſt himſelf at her Feet, but ſhe ſetting down by the Bed's Side, made appear to him by her Tears and Words, that ſhe abſolutely forbid him: *Meliſtrate* more overjoy'd than he made appear by his Looks, and who notwithſtanding the loſs of his Blood, would not loſe one Minute;

mute, would never submit to what the Chyrurgeons directed; No, answered he, (in holding the faireſt Hand in the World) what Reaſons ſoever you can alledge, I find them all but weak; you aſſure me, that my Life is in danger, wherefore then will you endeavour to abridge it, by ſeparating me from my better part, my Soul? If I muſt dye, permit me to dye with Pleaſure between the Armes of this Princeſs, rather than with Pain in yours: Scarce have I found her but you would take her away, to make way for your Remedies. Alas, can I have any more Sovereign than what ſhe brings; for if ſhe knows well how to wound, moſt certainly ſhe knows well how to cure thoſe Wounds ſhe makes: And if ſhe cures not all thoſe ſhe hurts or puts in danger, it is becauſe *Meliſtrate* alone is worthy to be wounded and cur'd by her. Take not then this needleſs Care, I find already that my Blood ſtops, ſince ſhe has teſtified, that it's Courſe was diſpleaſing to her. Although he endeavour'd to overcome that Weakneſs, which preſt him, yet he had not Strength enough, but was forc'd to ſubmit to it. Then it was, that the Chyrurgeon took his time to apply his firſt Remedies, or otherwiſe he would never have ſuffered that the diſconſolate *Praximene* had given place: She and the generous *Oroncliſe*, received a great deal of Conſolation, when they underſtood that the Situation of the Wound rendred it in no ways dangerous, and if any Accident happened,

pened, of which there was no appearance; it would only be occasioned by the loss of Blood: They had just made an end of binding up the Wound, when for the second time he came to himself; and because the Princess had understood that it would be prejudicial to him to speak for some Hours; at the first Word which he offered to speak, she laid her Hand on his Mouth, and commanded him to be silent. It is with a great Regret, said she to him, that I see my self oblig'd not to discourse with you, when I have so much to say, but since to preserve me a greater Good, I must deprive my self of this little satisfaction; imitate me I beseech you, and know that you can at present give me nothing more agreeable than your Silence. You command me a thing, answered he, with a low Voice, which I can hardly obey; to have lost you so many Ages, and not daring to open my Mouth to understand where you have been, during so long an Absence; to have found you, and not dare to enquire the means the Gods have made use of, to heap on me the greatest Blessing I could hope for from their Bounty: At last to find my self near you, without testifying the excess of my Joy, and as from the most unfortunate of Men, you have made me the most happy; is it not to ordain me Regrets amidst the highest of my Delights? And on my Part, added the Princess, in letting fall some Tears, is it not to dye of a like Regret, in the softest

Moment

Moment of my Life, after having so much desired to declare to you the Pains I have endur'd, I have the Occasion but dare not make use of it: But is it not doubly to dye, and cause to be afflicted after death it self, that I have depriv'd my self of this happiness, in being too cruel through the excess of my Love? Alas! I should have been satisfied, if I had shewn you the Innocency, with which I have made my self Guilty: Altho' 'twas impossible for me to obtain so great a Good, but by a Misfortune of which I dare not think, without being sensible of worse Apprehensions, than the Ill from which I am just Freed: I must submit to it, and in that interval, employ my mind on that mixture of which my Fortune has been full. Wherefore, reply'd *Melisbrate*, is the same fortune yours as is to me? Because, continued *Prazimene*, I am wounded as well as you. How, said he, endeavouring to rise, surpriz'd at these Words, are you hurt Madam? Oh Gods! Who is that Sacrilegious Person, that Heaven has permitted to commit this Cruelty unpunish'd? Let me know it, if it be your will, that I may employ my remaining Force to punish the most Treacherous and Abominable of Men. Hold Sir, said she, in restraining him from rising, if you would revenge the Author of this Wound, it must be against me that you take your Revenge: It is I that have hurt my self in wounding you, since the wound I have given you is as sensible to me, and that if you had died, I should not

have

have escaped. It is not nevertheless the Consideration of what Mischief may happen to me that forbids me to speak; it is the Attention alone that you would give thereto, which without doubt would as much incommode you as if you spoke your self; and yet unadvis'd as I am, I forbear not committing the Fault of which I would excuse my self: It is enough my *Melistrate*, engage me not to do a thing for which I shall forever repent, and that can make room for no other event than an absolute Despair. And to recompence my Obedience, said the happy *Melistrate*, (although it is already but too gloriously recompenc'd by the Blessing of your Sight,) assure me that you are my *Prazimene*, and that it is no Dream, which abuses me with so much content; because the more I make Reflections on the Blessing I possess, the less I imagine it effective. Yes, answered the Princess, I am that *Prazimene*, who has for thought her *Melistrate* alone, and will live for none but for him; would to the Gods, that I had been but in a Dream, when I wounded you, at least your Hurt had proved but a vain and imaginary Effect? Whilst these two Lovers were entertaining each other after this manner, protesting always that they would say no more, all the rest of the Company retired: *Oronclide* enquired very earnestly of the Chyrurgeon, if what he said of the Wound was true, and never were Words received with greater Satisfaction than the Answer which was given: It is the

most

most favourable Blow I ever dreſt, ſaid he, and I can aſſure you, that without the loſs of Blood, he would be in a Condition to act as you do. The Gods be prais'd, anſwered *Oronclide*, and ſo diſmiſſing him, command-ed all to retire, he drew near then to the Bed, where *Meliſtrate* repos'd, and not ſo much as hearing of him breath, was afraid of ſome new Accident; he took then a Light, and gent-ly went to *Prazinene* without ſeeing of her, but drawing aſide one of the Curtains, and ſeeing her reſting her Head near *Meliſtrate*'s, who was fallen aſleep amidſt ſo much Sweet-neſs, found that ſhe repos'd likewiſe: The Inquietudes, which had equally troubled them part of the Night, and the Fatigues of this laſt Misfortune, falling one on the Neck of the other, had ſo ſtupified them, that they agreed in all, even in the leaſt matters. *Prazinene* fell aſleep by vertue of *Meliſtrate*'s being ſo, and certainly if *Oronclide* could become Jealous, it is moſt certain that ſuch an Object would have ſtirr'd up that Paſ-ſion; but that generous Friend was ſo far from ſuch a Thought, that fearing to awa-ken them, he retired immediately: It is true that he pray'd to the Gods, that if ever he ſhould be ſenſible of Love, that his ſuffer-ings might be like to theirs: He was juſt a returing to conſider on the Service which he deſign'd for this fair Couple, when *Prazi-nene*, whoſe Sleep was but a bare Stupidneſs of her Senſes, lifting up her Head, perceiv'd him in that Poſture, in which the fear of

diſturbing

disturbing them had put him: She look'd if *Meliphrate* was not awake; but finding him asleep, she gently rose up, and they went from the Bed to have the greater Liberty of louder speaking: Finding themselves at distance enough not to disturb *Meliphrate*, they begun with the usual Complaints: But *Orondide*, was passionately Desirous to know how *Praximene* had made her escape from the *Bactrian* Court, who believ'd, as well as all *Assyria*, that she was by force carried thither, and how she could come to that Place under that Habit, not proper to her Sex, had intreated her to tell him, if knowing in her a like desire of and concerning the Adventure of *Meliphrate*, he had not voluntarily offered to satisfie her Curiosity. I shall not, said he to her, make you a Recital of this despair of this generous, but unfortunate Person, when he first heard of your being carried away: To say the Truth, his Complaints were publick; but his Resentment, none could comprehend, whatever sign thereof appear'd outwardly. He alone was capable of Sighing, as he alone was worthy to be belov'd of you. Some who envied his Happiness, and who had beheld the magnificent and stately Preparations for your Nuptials, with Eyes of Jealousy, were over joy'd at his Grief, because it suited with their Desires, but what occasioned their Joy soon after became their Despair; and as the envious Man becomes his own Tormentor, so they created Punish-

ments

ments to themselves; they had wish'd for some Mischief only to confound *Melistrate*'s good Fortune, and only rejoyc'd at your loss for that unjust Reason: But when they found that that unhappy Accident reach'd you alone, and that the incomparable *Melistrate* subsisted amidst his Despair, they then lamented your being forc'd away, and were punish'd for their ill Will, by being deprived of the Cause of their Envy: It being true Madam that had you not been ador'd by so many Persons, he who was to have been your Husband, had not by so many been envied. *Praximene* being ashamed at a Discourse begun so much to her Advantage, desired *Oronchide* to treat her after another manner, and to make use of terms more suitable: Upon which taking occasion to continue his Discourse; since you command me to commit an Injustice, answered he, you are oblig'd to imitate the Gods, who never permit an ill, but to draw from thence a greater Good; so that in enjoyning me to say but little, permit me to think the more. Provided you make me not Blush, continued the Princess, think what you please, when any one presumes of me more than they need, provided it comes not to my Knowledge, I take no Interest in it, since I cannot hinder Imagination: But brave *Oronchide*, let me languish no longer, delay not to tell me what has made *Melistrate* Prisoner of State, where for a great while he has held the third Place, and

been

been the principal Support? That Madam, answered he, immediately follows what I have told you already; so that to relate in a few words, what has past in a great space of time, I must take it just from thence where you interrupted me. The whole Court sigh'd for your loss; Enquiry was made on all sides, if no Troops had been seen to to pass by; And if no Noise or Report was made of the Design executed on your Person; and Expresses were sent to all parts, on all Roads, and to all Cities in *Assyria*; and the great, or rather the deplorable *Ninus*, whose Memory is well worthy of our Tears, dispatch'd abundance of Couriers to the Neighbouring Kingdom with express, Command not to return without bringing News of you; yet all prov'd in vain, and the more inquiry was made the less could we hear of you. The despairing *Melistrate* not knowing what course to pursue, humbly intreated his Majesty to take back those Employments and Charges which he had vouchsafed to confer upon him, to the End he might be at Liberty to perform the Resolution he had taken, which was to dye in search for you, or to search till he had found you: But that good Prince, who did not so much detain this faithful Servant, through the Necessity of his Affairs, which flourish'd wonderfully under his Conduct, as through the extream Affection he had for him, would never give ear to that Proposition: On the contrary, he commanded him to be

less

from him, then he was us'd to be, and withal, promis'd never to abandon the Care of Searching for you, but by his Death: At length the Court began by degrees to be more compos'd. Feasts were less frequent, although they still continued; and unless *Melistrate*, who seem'd to be in Darkness, or to say better, beheld nothing at all, not seeing you: All endeavoured to divert themselves, when an Express arrived from the Governour of *Ninive*, which let him know that you were under the *Bactrian* Power; that you having been refus'd to him, Spite and Fury had made him take up Arms to demand Satisfaction for the Affront; but that having bethought himself of the uncertain Event of War, had undertaken rather to force you away, which succeeded accordingly. Say you that a Packet was receiv'd, interrupted *Prazimene*, quite Astonish'd, by which his Majesty understood that I was in the hands of the *Bactrian* King? Oh strange Deceit! Alas *Oronclide*! How far distant was I from thence? And how subtilly has the perfidious Queen, who seemingly had so much desired that I should become the Wife of *Melistrate*, acted in this Affair: I was not out of this Country; but had I been amongst the most barbarous People, I should have received more Civility, than in a Kingdom, where the Jealousy of a Queen, and the Tyranny of an Amorous Prince, have combin'd together to be my eternal Persecutors. I begin Madam, said *Oron-*

clide, to understand this Secret, and although at first you surpriz'd me, when you told me you was not carried away into *Bactria*, yet having reflected on these strange Accidents, which have since befell this Kingdom, I find that so many Cruelties proceeded from the same Hand, for one and the same end and Purpose. You knew it before me, Madam, since by you they have begun to act that dismal Tragedy. But you know it not better than my self, since you was not present at the latter Actions, and that you have no ways been an Instrument therein, as I have been. The generous *Melistrate* understanding that the King of *Bactria* possest at his Prejudice, what he had sigh'd for so long, was seiz'd with so great a Resentment, that he fell Ill, and so dangerously, that from the very first they dispaired of his Life. *Ninus* believing then, that he had lost what next to the wicked *Semiramis* he held dearest in the World, made a Vow to put to Fire and Sword all *Bactria*, and with that Design, caused new Troops to be raised whilst the others march'd directly towards that Country: He was just ready to fall upon them, when he was advis'd to send an Ambassador to demand you, and likewise Satisfaction for the Affront committed, to the end, that if they refus'd to satisfie him, his Cause would appear more just, and his Proceedings more Legitimate: Although the Displeasure to see *Melistrate* in that Condition, whose Life was dispaired off, made him very Impatient,

patient, and desirous of Revenge; he followed their Advice nevertheless, and *Merzahene* was nam'd (shall I call him Father, or the Murtherer of his King,) to be employ'd on that Message. In the mean time, the afflicted *Melistrate* received no Comfort, for when by Intervals, the Feavour left him, he gave himself wholly up to Complaints. I remember going one day to visit him in the Company of some Lords; we stopt at the Entrance of the Chamber not to interrupt him, when we heard him pronounce these sad Words; Unhappy *Melistrate*, said he, since thy Feavour, and Weakness are incapable to free thee from this last Misfortune, and that it seems as if thy Forces encrease as thy Miseries do; Why, dost thou not find in a final Resolution, equally Generous and Necessary that Freedom thou desireſt. Alas, one Moment will put an End to this Eternity of Misfortunes! Yes I may say Eternity, since from the first Moment they began, I forgot those Delights I formely tasted: Insomuch that I look upon my self never to have been the Possessor of any, or if I do remember them still, they do but add to my Torments. Thus as past things, though dear in their Birth, appear now to me but under a Form resembling my Disgrace, so likewise does that hope which you would have me still to be Master of, my cruel Friends, present it self otherwise to me than to you: Good Gods, where is it to be found? Alas, it

is true that I have found *Prazimene* again: But ye Gods, in finding of her thus, I have loſt her for ever. She is no longer that *Prazimene* whoſe chaſt Embraces were reſerved for *Meliſſrate* alone, but her who was deſtin'd for a Prince unworthy to ſerve her: Oh cruel Word, have you eſcap'd my mouth! Oh fatal Thought have you ever been harboured in my mind? Yes, ſaid he, after having been ſome time ſilent; but without an Intention to offend you Divine Princeſs; moſt certain it is the effect of a great Force or Reſtraint, and not any defect of your Affection. But happy Prince, know you how to adore the Divinity you poſſeſs? Do you Treat her as your Queen, or as a Goddeſs? Does *Prazimene* accept of your Vows and Sacrifices? Or ſince your unjuſt Marriage, do you ſuffer her to treat you as a Husband? What, are you not her Slave? What, have you no other Sentiments, than thoſe of Reſpect and humility? Ah Traytor! Thou dyeſt, and the ſole Reaſon of becoming the Inſtrument of Vengance from the Gods, makes me wiſh to Live! Yes moſt deteſtable Prince, I will live to puniſh in your Perſon a Raviſher, and an impious Wretch. We were not ſenſible of a ſlender Compaſſion, hearing the agreeable Reaſonings of ſo juſt and ſad a Complaint; but on the other Side, we were not a little ſatisfied, when we underſtood that he reſolved to Live. It matters not, we cry'd, what occaſion obliges him to take Courage, provided

vided he gains his Health; And thus what all the Care and Medicines in the World could not do, the just Passion which inspired him with Vengeance so quickly operated, that in less than six days he was in a Condition to rise. The Truth is, the return of my Father did not a little advance it, he was fortified in the desire he had of Revenge, which had made him quit his Bed. Our Monarch learn'd from him, that the *Bactrian* King protested himself innocent of what was laid to his Charge, that it was true that by the desire he had testified for you, he was willing to give something to his Love, but being unjustly refus'd, the Knowledge of the Fault he had committed, had you been given to him, would immediately have followed that Refusal: That nevertheless had his Affection continued, and that there had been no other Remedy, he was resolv'd never to obtain that by Cunning, which by Force he could have. This was the punishable Answer which that Proud Prince returned, and which did not so sensibly touch your *Melistrate* because it was address'd to the Majesty of the great *Ninus*, but because he spoke of you with an insolent disdain. And on the other hand neither our dead Sovereign, nor *Melistrate*, nor the greatest part of the Court did otherwise believe, than that you was carried away, assuring themselves that the Protestations of the King of *Bactria* had been followed with civiller Language, had they been true. Behold *Assyria*

Syria now all in Arms; *Ninus* gives orders that Soldiers ſhould be rais'd in all parts, and *Meliſtrate*, who ſince his Illneſs breath'd nothing but Fury and Deſpair, advanc'd on the Frontiers with theſe Soldiers, which were always in readineſs. Alas! interrupted again *Praximene* with Tears, which manifeſted the Goodneſs of her Mind, how obſtinate was the wicked *Semiramis* in her cruel Intentions, who in one Word might have appeaz'd this mighty Diſorder? And how powerfully does the Blood of ſo many People, ſpilt for the Puniſhment of a Crime which neither they, nor their Prince had committed, cry for Vengeance before the Throne of the Gods: Do not yet accuſe the guilty *Semiramis*, anſwered *Oranclide*, have Patience till the end of my Diſcourſe, before you ſpeak againſt her, and you will find that you have blam'd her for an Action which is praiſe worthy, in compariſon of that which ſhe hath acted. But perhaps fair *Praximene*, you may know as well as I, of the Murther which amongſt us is ſo publick? No truly, anſwered ſhe, I know not yet of what you think I underſtood, nor could I ever think that the Queen had ever done any thing more Miſchievous, and more to be condemn'd before the Gods, than to have cauſed the Maſſacre of ſo many Men, when ſo eaſily ſhe might have hindred it. So innocent a Mind as yours, ſaid *Oranclide*, could never admit of ſuch horrid Imaginations. But have one Minutes Patience, Madam,

Madam, and when you have heard the ſmall remainder of what I have to ſay, you will confeſs that, that Vertue which ſuffers it ſelf to be corrupted becomes infinitely more Criminal, then that temper which is naturally vicious: The diſconſolate *Meliſtrate*, continued *Oronclide*, was hardly arrived on the frontieres of *Bactria*; when the Enemy oppoſed him with a great and powerful Army, over which he became victorious, nothing hindred him, but all gave way to his furious efforts; inſomuch that if by his extream Toil and Labour his Strength could be leſſened, yet his Reſentment and Love reinſtated him to that degree, that nothing of humane ſeem'd able to reſiſt him. But ſurrounded as he was with Victory and Succeſs, and that the *Bactrian* King was reduc'd to that unhappy Condition as to expect nothing more from Fortune than a glorious Death; the cruel *Semiramis* having deſign'd moſt ſtrange Projects, began to put them in practice, to the end ſhe might bring them to their bloody perfection. I am going to declare my diſhonour, ſince being Son to *Merzabane*, I can ſay nothing againſt the Father, which will not appear to the diſadvantage of the Son; but I ſhall declare it in ſuch a manner, Madam, that after having given you to underſtand that I have had a hand in the ſequel of an Undertaking, of whoſe beginning I was wholly ignorant, that I have alſo repented ſo much for what I acted, that I can ſcarce believe

what I have done, did not the Success which is almost ready to be compleated, intirely perswade me to it. Then *Orbaelide* satisfied the curiosity of *Prazimene*, in declaring to her the violent affections, the immodest and shameless Queen of *Assyria* had conceiv'd for her *Melistrate*, that finding she could not corrupt his Vertue by Love, she believ'd that she might overcome him, by satisfying his ambition, to which end, she had resolv'd upon the Murther of the unhappy *Ninus*. And that having offered him the *Assyrian* Crown, that Prince so faithful and generous, had redoubled his disdain from the moment he receiv'd the deplorable News thereof, instead of being moved by the greatness of her offers; that he himself had charge to oblige him to accept of the Diadem, or in case of a refusal, to seize him amidst of all those Troops which he Commanded: And that nevertheless he could say he had obey'd her Commission, without having executed it, since *Melistrate*, tho' a Prisoner, was more at liberty than ever. The Princess, confus'd to the utmost to hear the recital of a Tragedy, which she could not believe, did scarce give attention to these words, which followed the Murther of the great *Ninus*; It was a difficult Task for her to believe the horrid and dismal truth of that Discourse, insomuch that *Orbaelide* might have continued it without any interruption, so great was her amazement; she detested so barbarous an Action, but at the

same

same time admired the strange resolution of a Woman whose accomplishments had been so rare and remarkable, and that which made her sensible of some Joy amidst the grief for so fatal a Disaster, was the incomparable fidelity of him whom the Gods had inclined her to Love: Being thus agitated by the divers occasions of astonishment which this recital had raisd, she did not perceive that *Oranclide* had finish'd his Discourse, but remembring how long she had been separated from her *Melistrate*, do you know, said she, on a suddain, who were the Ravishers of *Praximene*? Does not the unjust affection which our Queen had conceiv'd for *Melistrate*, make you judge, that I was a fatal hindrance to her Designs, and that on any terms she ought to get me away; she therefore was the only cause of my being forc'd away, and not the *Bactrian* King; and without all doubt, it was a piece of her mischievous cunning, to cause Expresses to come to Court of that false News, which accus'd that Monarch of having me under his Powers But, good Gods, of what small moment would that have been, if the division of two Crowns, which has cost the Lives of so many Men, had not follow'd. Nor had not all that been of consideration, if that unnatural Action, which I can scarce believe, had not been the conclusion of so many misfortunes; and of which nevertheless, you ought not to doubt, answered *Oranclide*; would to the Gods, Ma-

dam, answered he, that it was not so true, *Assyria* by this accident, has receiv'd the most sensible Blow that an Empire can endure, and would not behold it self at present on the brink of ruine; *Melistrate* would not have been reduc'd to that sad Condition you see him in, and you your self would have been upon the terms of enjoying that happiness which would not have been subject to change; whereas those that you may hereafter receive will never be certain; nor should I on the other hand, have had the glory of rendring a Service to the most worthy of Mankind. What I have said thereon, Madam, is not to give you any apprehensions for the future; it is only to conceal nothing from you, of what might be foreseen, to the end that you might take your Resolutions, and those too of a sufficient force to overcome all those difficulties which might oppose you. For my self, I pretend to partake so much of your cares and pains, that if I should not be endued with Understanding and Industry enough to dispel them, at leastwise I may have affection enough to resent their most cruel attaints, and to suffer them with an excess of content and satisfaction. I know very well, *Orondide*, answered the Princess, that you Love *Melistrate*, and this assurance makes me believe that you Love me likewise, especially being his better part; to Love him perfectly, you must cherish me. I do not then doubt but that the Miseries which Heaven has

has destin'd for us, would have some influence on you, and that desire which you have to see my Constancy, without defect, does oblige you to give me the Advice which I have just now receiv'd. But if I was invincible when I had none by my self to support my Courage in the greatest afflictions, what can I not do now, that I find in you an Example which I ought to follow. Certainly whatever Inconstancy Fortune it self can practice to annoy us, and what rigorous persecutions with which the cruel *Semiramis* would destroy our Love, it will prove for the future but a streighter binding of that Knot, which will prove too strong to be unloos'd by her wicked Practices. And you hold less from that Example and Counsel of which you speak, said *Oronclide*, those Testimonies of a Mind absolutely resolv'd, than from your own proper Vertue. But, Madam, since I have faithfully given you an account of what past in our Court since your absence, you might favour my Curiosity with the Relation of those unhappy Adventures which have befallen you, yet if there should be any thing which ought not to be discover'd to me, or if out of any other Consideration, the Request which I make is not agreeable, I conjure you to refuse it. *Prazimene*, after having satisfied *Oronclide*, that there was nothing of Secret which she might not let him know was preparing to declare to him the particulars of a thing of which he had learnt but the general,

ral, and she had already advanc'd very far in her Discourse, when she was interrupted by a noise which was made at the Chamber door; *Orontide* rose from his Seat to listen, and found that some body knock'd softly to come in; he ask'd who was there, and when he understood that they demanded entrance, he opened the door himself without calling any of his Attendance, who lay in a Room next to him; he was surpriz'd to see that it was a Soldier of his Troops, and was much more, when after having demanded what oblig'd him to return so soon, being but just gone, he receiv'd this Answer. My Lord, said he, I had not presumed so far, had it not been of great importance to you, and upon that, having obtain'd leave to shut the Door, to the end that if he was followed, they might not hear what he was relating, he pursued his Discourse in these words: After that we were retired, four or five of my Comrades desired us to hear something, which they would communicate to us; and one of them having Liberty to speak, made this Discourse; as well for the rest, as for himself. I know not whether you have observ'd those Testimonies of affection, which our Commander renders to the Prisoner; but if you have never so little, it is impossible but your Sentiments should agree with ours, he takes a more particular Care of him, than he would of our Queen; and even upon that Accident which lately hapned, he spak so advantagiously

giously of him, that we must be either blind or deaf not to suspect his Fidelity. This is the Cause, my Friends, which makes us resolve to think on the means of hindring him to ruine us, in the saving of the Prisoner, as there is great appearance that such is his intention, and that we were very desirous to advertize you thereof, to the end that we may jointly consult of the Means we ought to take to prevent that Evil which is preparing for us. This attentively was listned unto, but was better received, by reason that without contradiction they all agreed in the truth thereof; insomuch that several who perhaps till then, had not so much as thought of any such thing, have now made particular Remarks on your actions, and the conclusion has been, that if you continued your good usage to *Melistrate*, they would seize on you, and conduct you to *Babylon*, and so put you both in the Queen's power: This Design taken, every one was retiring; but he that had made the Discourse, having testified that he had something more to say, they betook themselves to listen again. He prayed us to consider, that if we defer'd the execution of this design, perhaps it might happen that you had already given the Prisoner his Liberty, and that we ought to seize on you as soon as you let forth to morrow. Never was there seen, my Lord, so suddain a change of a resolution already taken; this last Proposition was approved of, and found very needful;

and

and altho' it was forbid after that to say any more, yet I believe had it been deliberated to have laid hold on you immediately, even that would have been received unanimously and without any contradiction: As I was impatient to have them retired, to discover to you their Design, I feigned my self asleep, until those which lay in my Chamber were so in effect; and when they were in the deepest of it, I got out as secretly as I could; if you judge me any ways serviceable to you in this affair, you have but to command me; and you may find, my Lord, that I have as much fidelity to serve you, as I had good will to discover the wicked intent of my Companions. *Oronclide* without being astonish'd at this accident, ask'd him several Questions, to be satisfied whether what he heard was true, because he scrupled it, least it might prove an invention to baulk his Design; to all which he answered so pertinently, that there remained no longer any doubt in him. In the mean time, *Prazimene* who had seen nothing but what was fatal since that moment in which she had learnt the Imprisonment of *Meliſtrate*, revolving that in her mind, and adding to it this last misfortune, imagined that there was no longer room for hopes, and without doubt the tears were going to overflow her beauteous face, if *Oronclide* in endeavouring to interrupt their course, had not told her in few words, that there was yet one way left to retrieve them

from

from this danger. Beholding then the Soldiers, who had made the discovery of what was plotting against him with an eye which conjur'd him to be faithful, or which assur'd him of a severe Punishment, if after having engag'd his Faith he should break it, he continued to let *Prazimene* know, that if *Melistrate* had strength enough to bear with the fatigue of a Horse, they might have time enough to get a good distance from that place, by the favour of what darkness yet remain'd, to escape the present danger; he added, that not being far from *Bactria*, they might retire thither; and that altho' it was in a Kingdom whose disasters were occasioned by *Melistrate*, nevertheless it ought to be considered, that Kings never act any thing unworthy of their Diadems, and that Consideration being removed, the *Bactrian* King would hold it as a favour, that that great Person would fly to him for protection. Alas, answered the sorrowful *Prazimene*, since you have reduc'd all our hopes to these points, I may well say there remains no more for us. That *Melistrate* should be in a condition to endure the toil and tediousness of so precipitate a Journey after the wound I gave him: That after the loss of so much Blood, he should have force enough not only to take charge of his own health, but likewise that of another; Oh Gods! it cannot be perform'd but by a Miracle; it is what I do expect also, and upon what I ground the Advice I have now given, if

Melistrate

Meliſtrate ſeconded by the ſole remembrance of his *Prazimene*, has perform'd ſuch things that Fame was fearful to publiſh it, leaſt it ſhould paſs for Fabulous, and meet with no Credit, what can he not do now, when he ſhall have before his eyes the excellency it ſelf; without doubt this fair Object will revive that ſtrength and vigour which dwels in his Breaſt, and that by a Miracle, of which he alone is worthy, his Cure may prove as ſuddain as his Wound. Theſe laſt words were pronounc'd with a Voice loud enough to interrupt the repoſe which *Meliſtrate* took; he was ſurpriz'd not to find *Prazimene*, when he reach'd out his arm towards the Place where he thought to find her; but hearing the noiſe which was made not far from his Bed, he judg'd that ſhe was amongſt the number of thoſe which ſpake with ſo much vehemence. He liſtned a little to learn if it was ſome additional misfortune, well knowing that they would never advertize him of it, if they did not abſolutely deſpair of a Remedy; at length the Princeſs letting him hear ſome Sighs, which ſhe could not ſuppreſs, he drew aſide the Curtain, and advancing his Body quite out of Bed; Is there, ſaid he, any new Subject worthy of your tears, or rather after ſo wonderful and accidental a meeting, can any thing happen that can be of force enough to ſhaken our minds, and trouble our contents: Oh *Meliſtrate!* anſwered the Princeſs drawing near him, have I not reaſon to

Sigh,

Sigh, when I see that each moment prepares new Misfortunes for us? If Death it self be deem'd a disaster, and that we are threatned therewith, cried *Melistrate*, the Gods cannot send me one more pressing than that which I shall suffer in your presence, I will at least give the Lye to Nature, which holds that the passage from Life to Death, is dreadful even to the most miserable; since upon the renewing of my happiness, I could have see it fall without the least sentiments of regret. I know very well, answered *Orinelde*, that this timorous Lover would represent to you as a mighty thing, an accident which is very common, but have a little patience and you will see that a violent affection must have as violent apprehensions. Prince, continued he, in what Condition do you find your self after the wound given you by those fair hands, why do you ask that, answered the Prince, is it to demand satisfaction for some offence which they might have given. But shall you have strength enough, reply'd *Orinelde*, to serve your Princess on so lawful an Occasion. Force enough, said the wounded *Melistrate*, rather ask whether I would not rise up again from the dead, to render her the least Services; I have enough not only to undertake to revenge her quarrels, but to do it effectually, and I except nothing but what I will perform, when it shall be in question to fight for so Just and Glorious a Cause. You have then more than you have

occasion

occasion for, answered this real Friend, to escape that danger which *Prazimene* has presented to you so great, having no other thing to overcome, than to save your self during the remainder of the Night, there is still sufficient to convey you far enough from hence before you can be pursued: Insomuch, continued he, directing his Discourse to *Prazimene*, I can see nothing to renew your tears, or which ought to create in you so much fear. *Melistrate* not knowing how to explain the word saving himself, not having heard what the Soldier had declared, was quite astonish'd to hear him; when *Orouclide*, after having made appear to him, that on this Occasion it was not shameful to save himself, discovered the Reasons why he gave this Advice: I see well continued he, perceiving that *Melistrate* shook his head, as not consenting to his Proposition, that you are too generous to save your self, whilst I remain in danger; and by that seem to deman'd what will become of me: But let it suffice, dear *Melistrate*, that whoever serves you, cannot perish; I shall be dispos'd of as it pleases the Gods; and nevertheless whatever becomes of me, I shall be too well satisfied, if any misfortunes happens to me, when I shall remember, that I have been serviceable to you, to confess to you the truth, my Resolution is, never to abandon you, but to render my self the Companion of your Fortune; and since that cannot b without

prejudicing

prejudicing your Liberty, it would be much better that I remain here to prevent some part of these Designs which are framed against you, or to destroy them quite in declaring my self your Deliverer: This will never hinder that I partake not of your Adventures, and that sometimes in remembring of me, you might say, *Oronclide* wanted an Example to parallel ours, to oblige him to embrace a generous inclination. Ye Gods, cried the Prince, what Counsel is this? Is it possible that you should endeavour to make me act a thing which on the like occasion you would not think on. What, dear *Oronclide*, shall I abandon you to the rage of a slighted Lover, whilst I shall seek for a place to shelter my self from her infamous Persecutions; you will receive the glory and honour of so generous an Act, whilst I shall receive the shame of being Idle; you will be made a Prisoner, whilst I shall enjoy a Liberty which will redound to my eternal disgrace; no, *Oronclide*, it is just stifling me in your caresses; it is saving my Life, but robbing me of my reputation; treat me, dear Friend more honourably, or Love me less, I'll go with you to *Babylon*, as I have already resolv'd, and there acquitting you of your Promise to that Barbarous and Cruel Queen, I will bear witness to the whole World of her parricide and Impudicities: Do not think that I will delay one moment the execution of what I have said, no, I have so great a desire

sire for it, that if my wounds at present hinder the effect, I am afraid I shall murmur against them: But what do I say, can I ever murmur against them, when I consider the dear Author of them? but at least, you may be assured that this is the only obstacle which in this case I can patiently endure. Do you resolve to be lost, answered *Prexalide*, and having no other consideration than that of an imaginary honour, do you desire to forsake the dearest care your can take, recollect your Reason as you ought to do, and you will find, that what herein is glorious to me, cannot become honourable in you; I am entire to my self, but you are divided; it is therefore permitted me to act as I please, or at least I am enjoyn'd to it by honour and friendship, to pursue what I have determin'd, and you ought to do nothing without the permission and consent of your *Prazimene*, will you disobey her, when her tears commands you to quit that thought, you behold her before you without any other Language at present, give way *Melistrate*, and submit to this excess of Love, and be this day capable of fear, she has apprehensions for you, tho' none for her self, do you then fear for her, and not for your self; remember that hence forward, you are her only refuge, and considering that your Life depends upon hers, love your own. if you are desirous of hers, good Gods, can it be possible that you should seek for your satisfaction by ways

displeasing

displeasing to her; dare you conceive any thought contrary to her will; Oh generous Prince I cannot believe it, notwithstanding your design does almost perswade me to it; quit it then, and by a longer retardment of a Misfortune, do not occasion a deplorable one never to be retrieved. *Melissrate*, who for the strongest and most powerful considerations, would never have consented to have left *Ormelide* in that danger, in which his own Liberty must infallibly have engag'd him, was scarce requested thereto by his Mistris, but becoming obedient he consented to it; he, who never any fear before could surprize, now trembled with the apprehensions of displeasing her, he turned his eyes then from *Ormelide*, and casting them on the Princess, seem'd to beg of her to declare her Opinion. *Prazimene* understood very well his Language, but her Tears and Sighs not being so soon overcome, she remained some time without answering; at last conquering her grief, she confirm'd *Melissrate* in his obedience: I applaud your generosity, said she, but I applaud you still more for your Love; if when you engag'd me with your affection, you had told me that Love should give place to your courage, I had not constrained my self now to obstruct or hinder your present purpose; but since you excepted nothing out of that power you then gave me, I will therefore relinquish nothing that may in the end prejudice us: I cannot think of the danger in which

which you desired to precipitate your self, without dying with fear, and I believe I may be dear enough unto you to make you hate the very thought, after having satisfy'd you how insupportable it is to me; relinquish it then I beseech you, and for the future embrace none but what may tend to our common content. Fair Princess, said the passionate *Melistrate*, if I have ever made any resolution which I have esteem'd to be contrary to yours, render me the most miserable of Mankind, here I have less need of Favour than of Justice. As the glorious Title of being your Servant is the greatest advantage, with which I can be honoured, I have believ'd that the least action ought not to render me unworthy thereof; If therefore Divine *Prazimene*, any accident was able to astonish me after so precious an acquisition, or if I should have refus'd to undertake the greatest dangers, which leads to glory should I deserve the possession of it; do not therefore think it strange that I despise the most difficult Adventures, but make use of it only, I mean that power you have, and you will find that it will eternally prove the Rule for my Designs. *Oronclide* finding that all things were disposing to succeed according as he had desired, interrupted that Discourse, which was beginning to draw on another, to acquaint these Lovers that it was time to depart; then *Melistrate* dress'd himself, and (oh Miracles of Love) he made appear as much readiness as if he had

had not been hurt; He had just made an end when *Oronclide* order'd the Guard, who had discover'd to him the Secret, to call the Master of the Inn: He executed his Commands with as much discretion as the necessity of this important escape did require; and when he was come into the room, he receiv'd Orders to call one of his Servants who best knew the way, and to open that Gate which he observ'd gave upon the fields: This Man, who minded nothing but his profit, and imagined that he perform'd his Duty in obeying *Oronclide*, as being Commander of a Troop, one part of which was in a mutiny in the fore-part of the Inn, with speed executed what was enjoyn'd him: In the interim, he who had disclosed the Secret, got some of the best Horses Sadled, and when all was ready, *Oronclide*, notwithstanding all that *Melistrates* the Princess could say, took one to conduct them some part of the way; that Man was likewise one of the Company, together with him whom the Innkeeper had sent to serve them for a Guide; and thus it was that this small Troop began to leave a place where nothing but Blood and Captivity reigned. At the end of the Town *Oronclide* commanded the Guide to put them in the nearest Road to the first City, which was in the power of the *Bactrian* King, which he did, having understood that they desired to avoid the common ways; he carried them through the Woods, where of necessity, they must pass

pass to get into a Road, which he assured them was as easie to follow as the ordinary way: Whilst thus they march, the thanks due to their Curteous Deliverer, moderated the sad thoughts of their Separation; but when they were come to the place where there was no longer need of a Guide, their words on a suddain failed them, and an equal concern seiz'd on all their Minds: *Oronclide* would willingly have gone further, not to have left them, who were so dear to him; and on the other hand, he was not desirous of following them, being of Opinion that he should be less serviceable in being with them than absent. *Melistrate* wish'd that he might return with *Oronclide*, but considering *Prazimene*, he no longer desired it, and could resolve on nothing but her safety. At length after having beheld each other for some time without speaking; those two Friends animated with one and the same motion, embrac'd, and the afflicted *Oronclide* made *Melistrate* promise that he would not admit of a third into their Friendship without his knowledge, and for his last compliment; I shall be jealous, said he, least another more worthy should possess it to my prejudice; nevertheless that Jealousie would cease as soon as I should have understood that his Vertue rendred him worthy of it; because as I ought to give place in this, I would carry it from all the World by the greatness of my Service: If therefore this misfortune

should

ſhould happen to me, when I ſhould conſent thereto, at leaſt it ſhould not be without this reſerve, that I ſhould be the third partaker of your Friendſhip, but that I my ſelf ſhould ſtop you, who for loving you ſo well, deſire that you was at diſtance from me, and do not conſider that it is high time for me to be ſeparated from you. Go then thou faithful Lover, fly from a Country which is fatal to you, and believe that in permitting me to poſſeſs your place here againſt Fortune it ſelf, you grant me ſuch a favour, as after it I ought never to pretend to any other. At theſe words leaving each other, *Oronclide* turned to *Prazimene* to take his leave of her, and then dividing their Company in two, the one retook the Path which he had left, whilſt the other took a quite oppoſite one. *Meliſtrate* had remained ſilent for ſome time to conſider on the loſs of his Friend, which he imagined to be unavoidable, had not the converſation of her, whom he held to be the deareſt in the world diverted his grief and affliction. He had ſcarce quitted the generous *Oronclide*, when his merit was the greateſt part of his Diſcourſe, and not the continuation of his Misfortunes. *Prazimene* was the only Cure for his wounds, and being far from leaving any ſigns, took away ſo much as the remembrance. Their Diſcourſe was not always upon one Subject; from the Vertues of *Oronclide*, they were mindful of their own intereſt in particular; they renew'd

amidſt the horror of the Woods, and the obſcurity of the Night, thoſe innocent and chaſt careſſes, which at Liberty in a magnificent and ſplendid Court they had taſted, and as if they had undertaken to make a ſmall recital of their harmleſs and tender affections, they repeated their Vows which they had ſolemnly and mutually made, and thoſe Promiſes exactly obſerv'd, and finiſhing by a kiſs thoſe agreeable Proteſtations, they alighted in a Wood, which they were to paſs through, to give ſome time for the recital of each of their Adventures: But *Prazimene* was no ſooner ſeated on the graſs, but that ſleep which could not before ſurprize her by reaſon of the motion of the Horſe, gently now endeavour'd to ſlide into her eyes; it ſeiz'd on her then with a pleaſing violence, and altho' ſhe ſtrove to overcome it to pleaſe her *Meliſtrate*, to whom ſhe had begun her Diſcourſe of being carried away, ſhe could not ſo well reſiſt it, but that after having began one and the ſame thing ſeveral times, and told without any order ſeveral accidents which deſerv'd a particular and regular account, ſhe ſuffer'd her ſelf to be overpower'd by that ſweet and amiable Conqueror. The Prince who never heard any Eloquence capable of charming him to that degree, as did this incoherence of *Prazimene*'s Diſcourſe, ſuffered her to go on, without telling her of her Miſtakes. He was ſo raviſh'd to hear her thus by times tell things without order, and then on a ſuddain

ſuddain recollect her ſelf, that he forgot to intreat her to adjourn her Diſcoure 'till after ſome hours repoſe: At length finding her faſt aſleep, he came to himſelf, and remembring his Duty, he laid her ſo that ſhe might not be incomoded, by the miſtineſs and vapours of the Morning. Some ſmall Rays of Light began to make one diſcern thoſe Objects near one, inſomuch that he might admire all thoſe Graces which adorn'd the Perſon of his Princeſs: He obſerv'd indeed no more than what he had before beheld, that is to ſay, her Face alone, by reaſon that the Dreſs, wherewith ſhe had diſguis'd her ſelf, hiding the reſt of her Beauties, nothing elſe appear'd to him. Nevertheleſs contemplating on her with an extream Liberty, and without being otherwiſe directed, he found out ſeveral Perfections, which he had never obſerv'd 'till then. He was tranſported more than once with the theft of thoſe Favours he ſtole, but they were ſo chaſt and innocent, that the ſincerity of his Deſigns were never ſhaken; and without doubt, this moment had paſſ with him for the deareſt and moſt happy of all thoſe which he had ever enjoy'd; if a mixture which is ordinarily obſerv'd in all things which are raiſed by Nature had not taken part in this extream felicity, for being then too happy: *Meliſtrate* felt new pains, and ſo lively they were, he choſe much rather to ſuffer them, than to be depriv'd of ſo dear an Object, or to be interrupted in

ſuch raviſhing Meditations. If I muſt purchaſe, theſe ineſtimable Graces, ſaid he, Gods do you not mock me, in permitting me to have them at ſo vile a rate, to endure ſo little, for ſuch vaſt ſatisfaction, is it a lawful compenſation? Do not imagine that in increaſing to the utmoſt, this Martyrdom I ſhall change for that, ſince the preſence of *Prazimene* creating an exceſs of Joy, cannot ſee it ſelf overwhelmed with exceſſive Grief. Thus *Meliſtrate* reſiſted the pain and anguiſh of his Wound. and his Courage which could not be leſſened, had added this agreeable Victory to the number of thoſe he had obtain'd in ſerving the *Aſſyrian* Empire, had not another Enemy aſſailed him: It was the ſame which had ſubjected the Princeſs, and who enjoying the right of a Conqueror, poſſeſt her entirely, without being Jealous of. But from the ſweets of his thoughts, was he ſcarce fallen into the charms of repoſe, when *Prazimene* in ſighing awak'd, ſhe beheld her *Meliſtrate*, whoſe paleneſs made her tremble; and adding thereto the remembrance of her Miſeries paſt, together with the unfortunate Condition of her Lover, and the apprehenſions of what yet might happen, her Sighs were going to accompany her Tears, when ſhe heard a noiſe near the place where ſhe was. She that Sigh'd not at Liberty for fear of diſturbing the reſt which *Meliſtrate* took, fear'd much leſs the danger ſhe had reaſon each moment to apprehend then the diſturbing of his

his repoſe. She roſe then reſolv'd to know the occaſion of the noiſe ſhe heard in the Wood, and advanc'd ſome ſteps towards that ſide, ſhe thought ſhe heard it. The Habit wherewith ſhe was diſguiz'd gave her aſſurance enough, but as ſhe ſtep'd to liſten to ſome words which the wind brought that way, ſhe was ſeiz'd behind, and turning about her head to ſee who it was, ſhe found her ſelf in the hands of a dozen or fifteen Soldiers, being upon the point of returning without prey, ſaid the foremoſt of the Troop, yet we ſhall fare but very ill, notwithſtanding they have met with this Cavallier. The diſconſolate *Prazimene* confus'd to the utmoſt by this unhappy accident, did not loſe that care ſhe took for the Prince; ſhe to whom the practice of many Misfortunes had taught her experience, preſerv'd to well her Judgment in this new Captivity, that by an admirable ſtrength of reſolution, ſhall I cry out, ſaid ſhe to her ſelf, alas ſhould my voice reach the Ears of *Meliſtrate*, as I cannot doubt but that it will, the ſurprize he will be in at awaking and finding me, may finiſh what his wounds could not perform; or if he ſhould have Force enough to reſiſt ſo rude an aſſault, Gods will he have enough to encounter this Company of Soldiers, and ſhall I be ſo miſerable as to ſee him loſe his Life for me, having already almoſt loſt it by my own hands? what ſhall I reſolve upon, unhappy *Prazimene*, whatever Deſign thou un-

dertak'ſt, thy *Meliſtrate* will be loſt to thee. To entreat his aſſiſtance, his Death will be the Fruit thereof, and if thou calleſt him not, thou art yet more aſſur'd to loſe him: But at leaſt let thy Miſery ſerve thee for Comfort, and that amidſt ſo many Misfortunes, thou mayſt yet acknowledge, that Heaven is ſtill ſomething favourable to thee, in that it has preſerv'd to thee underſtanding enough to know the difference: Thou wilt but half deſpair, when thou ſhalt but apprehend the death of thy Prince, and whether it ſhould ſo happen, through ſurprize or regret, or that his wounds, or any other accident ſhould give it him, yet uncertain of ſo diſmal a Truth, thou wilt ſtill flatter thy ſelf; whereas being preſent at his death, which infallibly would follow the relief he would undertake, thou would'ſt no longer be Miſtriſs of that ſoft moment of hope during the continuance of thy Miſeries. Farewel then dear *Meliſtrate*, and if the Genius which guides our affections have not quite left us; let him take care to inform thee that this adieu, which my poor heart takes of thee, and which my mouth dares not utter, is a pure effect of my Love: But let him tell thee at the ſame time, that I would have hazarded thy Life, had not the diſguize of my Sex ſecured my Honour. What other reſolution the Princeſs would have taken, ſhe could not have executed it, becauſe that during theſe ſecret regrets, they had carried her far from the place where

where *Meliſtrate* repoſed. The Brigade faithfully guided, ſtop'd not at the meeting of ſeveral Roads, ſo that in all diligence they travers'd the whole Foreſt, and being at length come to a Plain full of pleaſant Rivolets, which ran into a great River, did not leſſen their march 'till they had gained the Bridge. It was on the other ſide thereof that they began to queſtion the Princeſs, and that they told her ſhe was under the *Bactrian* Power: She rejoyc'd on the one hand, that ſhe had not met with Thieves, as ſhe feared, but ſhe grew ſad on the other hand, ſeeing her ſelf alone at the diſcretion of a Prince who having Courted and demanded her by honourable ways, was unjuſtly accus'd for having carried her forceably away, and ſtill more unjuſtly waged War againſt on that pretended Subject.

Nevertheleſs conſidering that Affairs were no longer as they were at firſt, and that the bloody *Semiramis* had changed the whole face thereof, ſhe believed that the *Bactrians* were not ſo cruel Enemies to her as that pittileſs Queen. And indeed it was not without an appearance, ſince the diſcretion of thoſe whoſe Priſoner ſhe was, ſhe might thereby judge of their Sovereigns Vertues; they did not only treat her with Humanity in the taking of her, but alſo with much courteſie and reſpects in their demands: Notwithſtanding what good opinion ſhe conceiv'd of their uſing her ſo favourably,

she was far from discovering of her self; it was not that she was ignorant that she could not always conceal her self, yet as she knew it well, she was resolv'd to lay a restraint upon her self, so ingeniously, that she would not make appear the least sign of her Sex, until she was in a place where she might discover her self with safety. Composing then her countenance, and making a shew of a greater assurance than in effect she was Mistress of, she understood from those Soldiers that they were conducting her to their Camp; she enquired if their King was there; and the Captain satisfying her thereof, was not contented with telling of her of that alone, but added, that some Spies had reported the day before that the *Assyrian* Army was in a strange disorder, occasioned by the misfortune arrived to their General, that the Troops of the King their Master, half overcome by the admirable Conduct of *Melistrate*, had taken heart again at that good News, and that several Commanders, of which he was one at that Report, were Commanded to advance into the Country, which was usurp'd by the Enemy, to take some Prisoners; that perhaps the surprize of that Adventure might make them stand less on their guard: But what confirm'd the Soldiers more absolutely in the belief of that News, was the arrival of the Princess *Azalinda* at the Camp, to whom the King would never grant it, since the beginning of the

War.

War. *Prazimene* hearing the praiſe of her Prince in the mouths of the *Bactrians* themſelves, was agitated by two different Paſſions, which the Name of *Meliſtrate* had raiſed in her, when that of *Azalinda* creating in her the ſubject of new thoughts, put an end to that diſturbance, where undoubtedly ſadneſs would have gained the upper hand. She believed that in throwing her ſelf into the protection of that *Infanta*, ſhe ſhould there find a refuge which would be neceſſary for her, in the midſt of a People extreamly afflicted on her account; and that if there ſhould happen unto her any misfortune in that Sanctuary, it would be more ſupportable and glorious than the leaſt ſhe ſhould ſuffer having neglected it: Being then well reſolv'd not to diſcover her ſelf to any but the Princeſs, ſhe was conducted to the Camp; where it was noiſ'd as ſoon as ſhe was arriv'd, that the *Bactrian* King was going to ſend back the Princeſs *Azalinda*. The fear which poſſeſs'd *Prazimene* of that departure, which was to be the next day, had without doubt made her deſpair, had not her being a Priſoner to a Commander, whoſe curteſie ſhe had much preſum'd upon, ſweetned the laſt effect of her misfortune: As he was going to give an account of his Courſe, and that the afflicted *Prazimene* feared to be preſented to the King, She ſtopt him, by the moſt humble and ſubmiſſive Language She could think of; and

that having the efficacy of that Vertue, had alſo. I know not what which ſurpaſs'd all that, being pronounc'd by a Mouth which it was impoſſible to refuſe. If the Misfortune of others is capable to make you underſtand, that you may become ſo your ſelf, ſaid ſhe, treat thoſe which fall into your hands, as you could deſire to be treated by them, if in their turn they had the like advantage over you. Do not grant to them indifferently all things, but alſo do not deny to them thoſe favours which cannot be but indifferent to you. I am of that quality and conſideration, that if you knew me, I doubt not but your Civilities would become exceſſive, ſince in the only quality of a Priſoner of War, which deſerves no favour, you have ſhewed ſo much reſpect, that I remain confuſed. Finiſh then, and make your generoſity perfect: Do not content your ſelf with your firſt Favours, add thereto if you pleaſe, that which I am going to requeſt and intreat. Preſent me forthwith to your Princeſs *Azalinda*, to the end ſhe may free me from my Miſeries. I ſhall not ſay that you will oblige me in procuring me this honour, that term will ſeem indecent in the mouth of a Captive, who is already too much indebted to you, but I ſhall dare to ſay that you will oblige your *Infanta*, and that the Teſtimonies thereof which you render, you may give Faith to my words, which perhaps appear to you incredible. The Commander much amaz'd at this

Requeſt,

requeſt, ſeem'd nevertheleſs inclinable to ſatisfie her. He did not only liſten to what *Prazimene* ſaid, but caſting his eye more curiouſly than he had done before on her face, he there obſerv'd ſomething that he had not yet ſeen in other Perſons, and what without cauſing an entire dazling; created at the ſame time reſpect and admiration. In fine, without being aſſured that ſhe was a Woman, he could not believe her a Man; and in that doubt which leant on that ſide where ſo many Charms which are not common to Men, compell'd him, he permitted her not to reiterate her Requeſt, but obey'd immediately. He conducted then *Prazimene* to the Princeſſes Quarters, and happily there found her as ſhe was entring into a Tent prepar'd on purpoſe for her, but withal ſo Rich, ſo Spacious and ſo well furniſh'd, that one might juſtly take it for a magnificent Pallace; he preſented our unfortunate Cavalier likewiſe with a Warlike Complement, and telling her in few wotds the extream deſire the Fair Priſoner teſtified to be offered to her, put that young Princeſs into ſuch a confuſion of thoughts, of which ſhe alone knew the Cauſe. She received *Prazimene* with an air ſo charming, that altho' that fair unhappy Lover was not ignorant of her own proper Beauty, ſhe thought ſhe poſſeſs'd none in compariſon of what She beheld in the Countenance and Actions of the *Infanta*. If *Prazimene* was raviſh'd with the grace of *Azalinda*, *Azalinda* found her

ſelf

ſelf no leſs ſurpriz'd at the Charms ſhe beheld in *Prazimene*, and nevertheleſs in the mutual ſurprize, the one acted nothing leſſening her Condition and Station, nor the orher againſt the Deſign ſhe had propoſed to her ſelf. Madam, ſaid the Suppliant, throwing her ſelf at the feet of that Sactuary which ſhe had ſought for, rejoyce at your good Fortune; bleſs the Gods for that they have this Day delivered into your power the fatal cauſe of the War, by which means that Kingdom which of Right belongs to you, is almoſt ruined. *Bathria* need no longer bewail its Loſſes, ſince ſhe has the means to take a ſignal Revenge upon the Perſon who has ſerved for a pretence to create it. I am the occaſion of the Slaughter of ſo many Men, which an Undertaking apparently juſt, yet in effect very unjuſt, has miſerably Sacrific'd to Love and Hatred: For in two Kingdoms ſtraightly joyn'd by Alliance, Manners and Affections have ſuffer'd a bloody diviſion; and for me thoſe fertile and rich Fields have been cultivated by the hands of Death; deferr not then any longer great Princeſs, to ſatisfie the Vows of a People who will behold the end of their miſeries by the end of mine; let a fatal moment for me, but advantageous to the two Crowns, put a period to thoſe unhappy remaining days, which the preſerving of my Life does yet prepare for them, and that the ſmall ſtream of my Blood might Seal and Defend this Country from that

cruel

cruel inundation which flows from all parts. By a Rigour ſo ſevere yet juſt, you may revenge all thoſe Crimes, which the War has committed; by that means you may fix a tottering Crown, and you will appear wonderful in one thing, that in endeavouring for you you will profit by your Enemies. *Prazimene* had not ſaid ſo much, if the ſilence that the Princeſs obſerv'd, had not given her the opportunity to continue it; and nevertheleſs altho' her aſtoniſhment was great, to hear words which ſhe could not comprehend, yet ſhe let none ſlip from her. Gods, ſaid ſhe, what a precious Treaſure is Liberty, ſince the loſs thereof carries with it, that likewiſe of our Judgment. This Captive here makes that plainly appear in the thought, which he has to be the Subject and Cauſe of our Diſorders, which without doubt has hapned to him, but ſince his being taken, wherein his mind is more intereſted than his Body. She was then going to Command them that they ſhould treat the Priſoner as his Youth and Beauty deſerv'd; when *Prazimene* approaching nearer, to the end that the *Infanta* alone might behold, what ſhe would ſhew her, unbutton'd her Coat, and with a Baſhfulneſs which this Action rais'd, not without reaſon, made her obſerve a part, which had been without parallel, in having no defect, had not the like centred in the Princeſs, in the ſame perfection: It was a Breaſt which aſtoniſh'd her, as well for its due proportion

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tion and whiteneſs, as to ſee it in a Perſon, whoſe Habit made her judge it to be of a Sex unworthy of ſo precious an Ornament: What ſaid ſhe, fair Captive (having now diſcovered her by her voice as well as by that action) is not *Prazimene* the fatal Firebrand to this Kingdom? and after that Truth owned, the ſame *Prazimene* confeſſes it her ſelf without any Reaſon: Is it a ſign that ſhe has loſt her Judgment, when ſhe ſeeks to periſh in the general wreck, of which ſhe is the innocent and unhappy Cauſe. Think better of her fair Princeſs, interrupted *Prazimene*, and ſay ſhe has loſt that good Fortune which once ſhe peaceably enjoy'd. Say ſhe is abandon'd by the Gods, add moreover that ſhe has loſt beyond hope the laſt of Happineſs which ought to remain; but do not ſay that her ſenſes are loſt, ſince they are ſo ſenſible of her Miſeries, ſince they ſo lively reſent them, and that they ſeek to be eas'd and reliev'd by the extreameſt of all Remedies. What are you the ſo famed *Prazimene*, cryed the *Infanta*, are you that Incomparable Princeſs who is reſpected even by thoſe whom ſhe makes to ſuffer; then ardently embracing her, ſhe remained ſome time without ſpeaking, but beginning again her Diſcourſe; certainly ſaid ſhe, I find my ſelf under a prodigious aſtoniſhment: It is not that I doubt, Madam, that you are not that Princeſs whoſe exquiſite Perfections triumph over the old as well as the younger Princeſs of

Asia; witneſs the King my Father, who quite conſumed by ſo glorious a Flame, from an old Monarch, is in a few years become a young Lover. Thoſe perfections which I have already obſerved, and of which the Gods were never ſo Prodigal but to a *Prazimene* alone makes me too ſenſible to doubt thereof: But I do not eſteem my ſelf happy enough to enjoy a benefit, which notwithſtanding I find I have not wiſh'd for in vain: At that going to renew her embraces, *Prazimene* retir'd. Hold, Madam, ſaid ſhe, I am ſo contagious, that the bare ſeeing of me, is of ſufficient force to infect you with my miſeries: If far diſtant from your Kingdom I have cauſed ſo much ill to it, what may it not ſuffer now that I am preſent in it, and may you not ſuffer, you who by an extraordinary bounty, treats thus the cauſe of all your Misfortunes. No, no, Madam, I do not demand of you any favour, which may prove fatal to you; I do not ſeek for a Protection, that may involve you in my Ruine; but I implore ſuch a Remedy which ought to be your Revenge, and my Safety: I ſhall not, anſwered the *Infanta*, eſteem my ſelf uncivil, if I ſhould have no regard to your Prayer and Entreaty; for beſides its being too full of deſpair to be granted, it would likewiſe deprive me of a ſatisfaction, for the enjoyment of which, I have often implored the Gods. Say no more to me, continued ſhe, obſerving that *Prazimene* was going to interrupt her, that

Bactria

Bactria is deſerted becauſe of you, that its whole extent is but as one Tomb to its Inhabitants; that its Fields inſtead of Delighting the Sight with their natural verdure, frightens one with the ſight of Bones, as well as the blood with which they are ſprinkled. It is indeed of great concern, yet it is much inferior and beneath that Treaſure which at preſent I enjoy, all ought to be proportion'd, ſo that thoſe things which are common may be acquired more eaſily, but thoſe which are excellent ought to be purchas'd at a dearer Rate; I behold you, I enjoy your Company: *Bactria* therefore is too well recompenced; I will not ſay for one part of its Loſſes, but too well made amends, as to the Price it ſelf, which you have coſt it. The Captain who had taken *Prazimene*, aſtoniſh'd at an Adventure ſo rare, made an exact reflection from that very moment, to the time ſhe was ſeiz'd: Whilſt the two Princes were thus diſcourſing, he imagined that if he had not treated her as a Perſon of Merit, at leaſt he had not offered her thoſe Indignities which the moſt moderate Conquerors exerciſe over their Captives; and finding that nothing had paſt, but what might be look'd upon as a favourable uſage, he believ'd that her Dreſs, which appear'd ſomething extraordinary, would make that paſs for Courteſie, which the knowledge of her Sex and Quality had claimed in another manner. Remaining therefore well ſatisfied,

fied, he was yet the more overjoy'd, that Heaven had made choice of him to be the Inſtrument of putting into his Princes hands the aimable cauſe of ſo many diſorders. In the mean time the *Infanta*, after thoſe great Teſtimonies of affection, by which ſhe endeavour'd to comfort *Prazimene*, obtain'd at laſt from that afflicted Fair one, that ſhe would take ſome Repoſe. She was not ſatisfied with Conducting her her ſelf into the Richeſt Chamber in her Pavillion; ſhe was notwithſtanding the humble Endeavours of *Prazimene*, the moſt affectionate and officious of all thoſe which by her Command were appointed to ſerve her. I cannot tell whether I ought to call theſe few hours, which this charming afflicted one remain'd without Motion, Sleep or no, ſince that her Mind being fatigued with her Diſturbances and Misfortunes, created troubleſome Dreams, which robb'd her of the ſweetneſs of her Repoſe. But be it after what manner ſoever I call it, whether Repoſe or Torment, however it had the appearance and likelihood of Sleep, if it was not a true one. *Azalinda*, who had often wiſh'd and deſired to ſee *Prazimene*, found it ſo difficult to believe, that ſhe enjoy'd that ſatisfaction, that ſhe reaſoned for ſome time thereon, to the end ſhe might doubt no more. At length the Object ſhe had before her eyes ſurmounting all her incertainties, created in her another deſire to accompliſh the latter: It was to learn the Cauſe which o-

blig'd

blig'd that Princeſs to make appear ſo wonderful a Deſpair. The Habit of a Man which ſhe wore, and by what ſtrange means ſhe came in her Power created in her that Curioſity. But what ſhe had heard in Publick coming freſh in her memory, made it ſo violent, that how great ſoever might be the pleaſure ſhe received in contemplating of her whilſt ſhe Repoſed; and regarding at her pleaſure each feature of her face, wherein there was nothing but what was Charming, ſhe would have been willing that *Prazimene* had not Repoſed ſo long; the fear of loſing the firſt moment when ſhe ſhould awake, hindred her from carrying the News of this Adventure to the King; inſomuch that ſhe was forc'd to content her ſelf, to let him know it from the Officer, who had no ſmall ſhare therein. As *Azalinda* was muſing on what ſhe ſo much deſired to know, and thinking upon what had been imputed to that Monarch about the carrying away of that Princeſs, all things appeared to her obſcure, *Prazimene* through an ordinary effect of Dreams, cry'd out, no, no, *Meliſtrate*, this ſeparation ſhall no ways divide us; whatever Inteligence there may ſeem to be between the abominable *Semiramis* and our Deſtinies; my mind ſhall always attend you, if I cannot accompany you otherwiſe. with theſe words ſhe awak'd, and receiving a Kiſs from *Azalinda*, juſt as ſhe opened her eyes, and at the ſame time heard ſuch kind expreſſions, which were

were ſo many Charms to render perfect a Friendſhip which was eſtabliſhing between them. They were but promiſes of a perpetual Union, and Hiſtory may lawfully aſſert, that that ſmall Dialogue might have paſs'd for one of the moſt excellent Diſcourſes which ſhe ever Recorded, could the Author make an entire recital of it. It ended but not the *Infanta*'s deſire, which when *Prazimene* knew, if you requeſt ſo much, Madam, ſaid ſhe, to know my Adventures, why do you not clearly let me know it, to the end I may ſatisfie you therein; tell me if you pleaſe, that you will participate of my good and evil Fortune, but likewiſe promiſe that you will have patience to hear ſo long a recital, and you ſhall behold me this moment Triumphant, to ſee my ſelf reduc'd to this unhappy State, that it ſuffices to perſwade us that the Heavens have Limits when they raiſe us, but none when they are pleaſed to abaſe us. If to aſſure you of my patience, anſwered *Azalinda*, is the means to engage you the eaſier in the recital of your Adventures, I will promiſe you to equal that with the deſire I have to hear them; therefore do not think lightly to paſs over any Circumſtances of your Hiſtory, rather force your ſelf to remember the leaſt paſſages, to the end I may know them as thorowly, as if they were my own. Oh, Madam, ſaid *Prazimene*, I muſt not only in obeying of you, entertain you with the particulars of my Life alone, but I muſt joyn

with

with it thoſe of a Queen whoſe Vertue heretofore favoured me, but whoſe Crimes and Malice at this time perſecute me; and it will rather cauſe your deſire to languiſh, than to ſatisfie your Curioſity. No matter Fair Princeſs, added the *Infanta*, provided it makes no addition to your Sufferings; it will be an additional ſatisfaction to me, if it be of the Queen *Semiramis* you are to ſpeak of, I ſhall be glad to learn the wonders of a Life, which as I have often heard, never yet had its equal: It is of the ſame, continued *Prazimene*, and ſince the entertaining of you therewith, will be agreeable, it is neceſſary that I relate her Hiſtory before my own: Then having a new embrac'd each other, the *Bactrian* Princeſs diſpoſed her ſelf to give attention to what *Prazimene* was going to ſay, and that unfortunate Princeſs thus began her Diſcourſe.

The End of the Firſt Book.

PRA-

PRAZIMENE:

THE

Second BOOK.

WHEN I repaſs in my Memory, thoſe Incomparable Vertues, which I have ſo long admir'd in that Queen, who will take up moſt part of my Diſcourſe; I have all the ſatisfaction imaginable to have for an ordinary Entertainment the faireſt moments of her Youth; ſince that it is true, that contrary to the common order of things, ſhe has made appear in a time, when if we ought to give way to our Paſſions, it is the Seaſon when they exerciſe over us the moſt violent Empire and Sway; and that Wiſdom and Vertue with which we ought to be endow'd to ſuppreſs all others in the great undertaking of an Heroick and Noble Life: But when I ceaſe to meditate on that thought, and that from her generous Innocency, I come to reflect on that prodigious diſorder which by her later Actions have been

bee made appear, I remain ſo ſurpriz'd, that I demand of my ſelf, if what I heretofore admired was true, ſince what I now find is ſo diſtant from it; or if what I now ſee is falſe, ſince thoſe things which I have heretofore took ſo much pleaſure to imitate, have been ſo generally obſerv'd, that it is not poſſible to recall in doubt, becauſe it is true Madam, that all thoſe eminent and excellent qualities (to amount to that degree, of which Fame has ſpoke ſo loud, and that never any yet attained to, but that Princeſs of whom I am going to ſpeak) were found ſo remarkable in her Perſon, that ſhe ought to be named Vertue it ſelf, and not the Vertuous *Semiramis*. And if to content you in part, you deſire that I ſhould make you a rough deſcription, I ſhall begin by thoſe things which are the neareſt; I mean by the Excellencies of her Body: But if from thence you would have me paſs to other Wonders, which ſhe no longer poſſeſſes, I mean thoſe dazling Beauties, which leaſt they ſhould ſurprize the whole World, are hid within, and which never ſhine out but by effects: I will not deſire you to give a diſpenſation, but to permit me only to ſay little, in ſignifying much.

The

The Hiſtory of SEMIRAMIS.

THis Queen of whom I ſpeak, was Fair, not becauſe of thoſe Ornaments with which Nature enriches the Ladies to whom often that Title is given. She was Fair I ſay, not in that manner as thoſe are, which are not to be look'd upon without extraordinary Raptures; but ſhe was endow'd with a Beauty ſo Divine, as ſtrikes an awe into the greateſt Courages, abaſes and humbles the Proud and Haughty, ſurprizes the moſt aſſur'd, and gives admiration to the moſt indifferent; good Gods, by thoſe accompliſhments how many Adorers has ſhe acquired to her ſelf, and how many Amorous Offerings have been preſented to ſuch juſt merits; but her Ingenuity and Wit, together with her manner of Behaviour had a great ſhare therein. The Country, which was witneſs of ſo many Beauties to make up but one intire Miracle was *Syria*, and the delightful *Aſcalon* was the happy City wherein ſhe was bred, which gives Name to the Kingdom of which it is the Capital, as this Monarchy takes its Name from the Principal Seats of its Kings. I was ſo young when thoſe rare perfections began to ſhine and appear to all *Aſia*, that I cannot call to mind, whether they were taken notice of all at once, or by degrees; and I was ſcarce arrived to the Age wherein a firm Reaſon and Judgment begins to enlighten the Underſtanding,

derſtanding, when hers was become ſo ſound and perfect, that imagination its ſelf did own its inability of making an addition to it. It was at that time when the great *Minus*, of Memory equally glorious, and deplorable, became enamoured with ſo many perfections. I ſhall begin my Diſcourſe but juſt before her Marriage, ſince my own knowledge extends it ſelf but little before that Ceremony. You are not ignorant, Madam, that that Victorious Prince was the Son of a Father, whoſe Ambition and Courage had made him to be fear'd by his Neighbours, altho' he perform'd not much, and that far exceeding ſo noble an Example he had conceiv'd in his Mind, ſuch Deſigns which were infinitely beyond ſo worthy a Predeceſſor. Following then, or rather exceeding by much thoſe brave Examples, without any other motive than that of Glory and Renown; after having vanquiſh'd the *Meſſapotamians*, the *Perſians*, the *Medes*, and divers other Nations, which by force of Arms he ſubdued in an Age of Vigour and Strength, he reſolved at length to carry his Victorious Arms againſt the *Syrians*: Thither he came with a numerous Army, and finding nothing able to reſiſt him, over-run the whole Country till he came to the Kingdom of *Aſcalon*. He encountred *Tarſenos* its King, Father to the Princeſs whoſe Hiſtory I am relating, and overcame him ſo intirely in three pitch'd Battels, that at length that unfortunate Prince

Prince was forc'd to ſhut himſelf up in the Capital City of his Kingdom, and to truſt his welfare to Walls and Ramparts, having not met with it in the reſolute diſpute of three generous Combates. You may repreſent to your imagination what was the diſorder amongſt us during the Siege of that City, in it was lodg'd likewiſe all our hopes; there was nothing but tears, and the Gods received leſs Prayers from us through Devotion than Fear, all was in deſpair, our Proviſion began to fail, the Soldiers were very much decreas'd by Sallies and Diſeaſes, and at laſt all the Reſolution and Councel tended to die in a generous and final effort. In truth it might well prove fatal, ſince it was deſign'd to draw out from the Town all thoſe that were capable of bearing Arms, to the end that dying by the hands of their Enemies, they might revenge their deaths, whilſt thoſe that remained, unable to undergo that employ, were to put fire to all, and to ſave the Honour of the *Aſcalonian* Ladies, in perſwading the moſt Couragious to put an end themſelves to their Lives, and by killing thoſe whoſe weak Reſolution ſhould fail them; moſt certain it is that Fame had deceived us; grounded on ſome feeble appearances, ſhe had repreſented the Great *Ninus* as a Monſter, who had no other deſign in his Conqueſts than to ſatisfie a vaſt Ambition, a Pride inſupportable, and a Savage Cruelty. In a word, that is to ſay as a

Prince the moſt Wicked and Inhumane; and yet nothing was more contrary to his Temper; none of thoſe Vices with which he was defam'd were lodg'd within him; but on the contrary, he was Maſter of all thoſe Vertues which were oppoſite to them; inſomuch that of the ſweeteſt and moſt excellent Prince in the World, they hade made him a moſt dreadful Tyrant. The incomparable *Semiramis* carried by a Reſolution altogether particular was reſolved to accompany in that Action thoſe Ladies which came near her in Courage; ſhe ſeparated then thoſe who deſpiſed their Lives, from thoſe who lamented the loſs thereof; and having ſhut her ſelf up in the Palace, which ſhe no longer beheld as the delightful Abode of the Kings of *Aſcalon*, but as the Tomb of her Chaſtity; without making appear any ſign of fear, but rather with an aſſured Countenance, ſhe conjured them not to regret thoſe days they were going to ſhorten; when in the midſt of her Diſcourſe, as if inſpired by the Tutelar God of our Country, ſhe ſtop'd on a ſuddain, and ſeem'd to ſtudy; After a ſhort ſilence, ſhe changing her face and words, cryed out, yes I will do it; and perhaps the Gods, who without doubt have inſpired me with this thought, will be aſſiſtant to my deſign, and perhaps will act by the hand of a ſingle Woman, what they would not ſuffer to be done by the power and ſtrength of a great many Men. Then chooſing four or five of thoſe in whom ſhe moſt

moſt truſted, ſhe enjoyn'd the others to attempt nothing till they had heard from her, and ſo retiring into a Chamber which ſhe ſhut too her ſelf, ſo much aſtoniſh'd thoſe which remain'd behind, that they beheld each other, without being able to do otherwiſe. In the interim the Soldiers, being joyn'd with moſt of the Inhabitants of *Aſcalon*, were got into the Field, Courageouſly to Celebrate there their own Funeral Rights, and were encountred by the Enemy. The Blood ran down on all ſides, and the Earth aſhamed to behold ſuch a Maſſacree, refus'd to ſhew its own natural colour to the eyes of the Combatants, to repreſent to them that of death and deſolation. Already the number of the dead, exceeded that of the living, and the loſs, altho' much leſs on our ſide, nevertheleſs was advantagious to the Enemy, becauſe they exceeded us much in number; when a Knight richly Armed, followed by two others, whoſe Armour was not leſs fair, arrived at the place where the Victory was diſputed with ſo much heat, becauſe thoſe Strangers carried neither the Device nor Livery of the *Aſcalonites*, nor of the *Aſſyrians*, thoſe that ſaw them, could not judge of what ſide they were, which obliged ſome of the Enemies Party to advance towards them, to be known who they were. But had no ſooner overtaken them, when inſtead of putting themſelves in a poſture of defence, they rendred themſelves Priſoners. He that was the richlieſt

Arm'd of the three, ſpeaking to thoſe who had taken them, pray'd them on the ſpot to conduct them to their Prince, in order to diſcloſe to him a Secret of Moment; they imagining that they had met with ſomething very advantageous, as well for their Party, as for their own particular Fortune, did not ſtay to be entreated to it a ſecond time: They conducted the Priſoners towards that Squadron where the King was in Perſon; and making ſome of the Commanders to underſtand the importance of their Prize, the King was immediately Advertis'd therewith. He retired from amidſt his Soldiers to give them Audience; and having receiv'd them with all the Civility the Place could admit of, promiſed them very extraordinary Recompences, provided there was nothing of Treachery in what they had to declare. It muſt be owned, Madam, that a brave Warriour in the heat of a Combate, ſeems to poſſeſs more at that time, than the bare quality of Man permits him to be Maſter of in the reſt of his Actions. I mention this, according as I have heard of the great *Ninus*, when he receiv'd thoſe Knights. He appeared to them greater than the greateſt of Men that they had ever ſeen; and that cruel and violent exerciſe he had been performing, had ſo heated him, that they immediately thought that fire proceeded from his Eyes, and that his Body being likewiſe enflamed, his Arms were become red, as well through the effect of that

that heat, as by the blood of his Enemies? This Observation was not made by me, I had it from the Chiefest of those three that beheld the *Assyrian* Monarch in that Condition, and who for to satisfie him spake thus. Unjust Prince, I know very well, that to come near to speak to you, I must of necessity make use of this piece of subtility, by which I have succeeded; being certain that after any other manner it would have been impossible for me to obtain what I now come to demand. It is not therefore to advertize thee of thy Victory that I came hither into thy presence; it is still less the desire to flatter thee, having alone escap'd the wreck of my Country; but a Lawful and just defiance I come to offer to thee, to spare the remains of the miserable *Ascalonites*, which thy Arms are ready to Sacrifice to thy Cruelty; cause I pray thee, this Massacre so unpleasing to the Gods to cease, and by a small Rivolet of Blood which one of us two shall shed, put a stop to that inundation, which has almost overflow'd this Kingdom. Be no longer deaf to those dismal Cries and fearful Groans of so great a number which must perish thro' thy Ambition; let thy compassion be no longer wanting towards those who are no less Men than thy self, and by thy becoming more just, either do thou thy self purchase the Victory, or lose it. Those who stood round that unknown Knight, began to murmur from the very first word

he ſpoke; and it is likely that they had cut in pieces thoſe three Priſoners, had not the great *Ninus* in addreſſing himſelf to them before he return'd the Anſwer, which he had reſolv'd on, as ſoon as he had heard that Courageous *Aſcalonite* had not Commanded them on the peril of their own Lives to act nothing in prejudice to what he had promiſed. Then addreſſing himſelf to the Knight; I accept of thy offer, ſaid he, our Diſpute ſhall make a deciſion of the War, provided that thou art ſomething above a common Soldier. Were I not of a Quality ſuitable, anſwered the Knight, I ſhould not be guilty of ſo much raſhneſs, as thus to addreſs my ſelf to the greateſt Monarch of *Aſia*, I am a Prince, and can boaſt that my Anceſtors have always been inveſted with the Royal Diadem. Thy word is enough, added the King, I require no proof of the truth thereof, ſince I had been ſatisfied, hadſt thou been but of the Nobility of thy Country; but does thy King agree and conſent to thy Propoſals; yes, anſwered he, as ſoon as thou haſt put a ſtop to the Battel, and that I ſhall have ſent a few words unto him. *Ninus* immediately ordered a Retreat be ſounded, and giving leave to one of the Companions of him who had demanded the Combate, to be conducted by one of the chief of his Camp, towards the Troops of the *Aſcalonite* Monarch, that old Prince, who would have lead his Men even to death it ſelf, rather than

than to ſurvive them, was greatly ſurpriz'd when he beheld the *Aſſyrians* retreating, imagining that ſome great diſorder was hapned amongſt them; he would have purſued them, but his Soldiers wounded on all ſides, and reduc'd to one half of their number, whatever were their endeavours they could not obey him: As he was wondring at ſo ſuddain a Change, conſidering on the cauſe of it, the Troop which convoy'd the Knight appear'd to get his conſent; he receiv'd the News, as we receive all ſuddain and unexpected things, and the Knight demanding to be heard in private, repreſented it to him juſt in the ſame manner as his Companion had ſpake to the *Aſſyrian* King; that is to ſay without diſcovering himſelf, and the great advantage he would reap by the Combate: If the Gods ſaid he, ſhould be favourable to him who undertakes your Quarrel, you will thereby put an end to the War, which otherwiſe cannot be ended but by your Loſs, and the total deſtruction of your Subjects. That if on the other hand, that Knight ſhould be overcome, you would be never the farther off from the means of dying generouſly, according to your former intention, without violating the word you have given. Thereupon his Majeſty letting him ſee that he did not underſtand that way of keeping his word, which was to reſign his Kingdom to the Enemy, if he remained Victorious; the Knight told him that he muſt reſign his

Crown, but was not obliged to ſurvive the Loſs; and that being already reſolv'd to die, he might ſtill flatter himſelf with the laſt hopes, which were, that if he ſhould not ſucceed, the way which he might follow would ſtill be open to him, all others being denied. *Tarſenos* ſatisfied with theſe Reaſons, ſent for the *Aſſyrians*, and Swearing in their preſence to obſerve all that the Prince had promiſed on his part, and which he had agreed upon with their King, ſent them with the Knight back again. In the mean time *Ninus*, who had receiv'd but ſome very ſlight hurts in the Battel, would not delay the Combate 'till the Morrow. Tired as he was, but yet animated to the utmoſt, and agitated by that Courage which he juſt came from exerciſing, he was deſirous to leave no interval between the ſatisfaction that he ſhould give his Enemy, and the ſecret deſire of Revenge, with which his Soul was diſturbed. In vain his greateſt Favourites and Friends endeavour'd to diſſwade him. In vain they offer'd to be honour'd with taking his place in the Combate: He made no reply to them upon that Subject, till he had made them know that he was as ſteady in his Reſolves, as inviolable in his Promiſes. The Place appointed was between the two Armies, juſt in that ſpace which the *Aſſyrians* had left between them and our Troops, where Curioſity ſhewed what power it has over us. Oh! how violent is that Paſſion, and how often

does

does it make us suffer strange inconveniencies for very little satisfaction; that was the Cause that the wounded of each Party took so little care of their Hurts, so great was their desire to behold so Noble a Spectacle, and to be witnesses themselves of the Success. *Ninus* and the unknown, placing themselves opposite to one another, lifted up their arms at one and the same time, and threw their Lances, which rebounded back again, they received no harm, but when they were their Swords in hand it was otherwise; the *Assyrian* Monarch following the instigation of his anger, summon'd all his Strength to assure himself of the Victory, by the advantage of the first assault. His Sword ready to obey, did not nevertheless perform all his Master hoped for, nor had it betray'd him, had it intirely executed his design: It is true, it touch'd the Enemies Helmet, but in such a manner, that it only broke the Buckles of it, the violence of the Blow falling upon his left Arm made a dangerous Wound. With what surprize was the King seiz'd withal, when instead of rejoycing at so fair a blow, contrarily he was in a dispair; what a confusion was he in, when instead of seeing a Man reduc'd to the point of losing his Life by his hands, he found himself ready to lose his own, by that Wound which he had given to the Fairest Creature in the World. As he alone was able to resent it, he alone alas, if Living, would be capable to express it perfectly. A long Head of Hair displaying it self at the

ſome time that the Helmet fell off, mightily aſtoniſh'd him, but a Face full of Charms, and mingled with Majeſty, appearing at length ſhining with Glory, touch'd him ſo ſenſibly, that it reduc'd him to that Condition, which one might ſay was neither dead nor living, but the medium of thoſe two extreams. He liv'd through the uſual Miracle and efficacy of thoſe fair Eyes, but he died with regret of having ſo cruelly offended her, to whom he would have much rather have paid his Adorations. In a word, it was the incomparable *Semiramis*, who not being capable of conceiving ſmall Deſigns, had undertaken to Fight the Victorious *Ninus*, and to die by his Arms, or to purchaſe the quiet of her Country by the death of that Hero. She had, as I told you, taken with her the four Ladies which ſhe loved beſt, and being by their aſſiſtance Arm'd, had made choice of two to accompany her under the like diſguize; ſhe went forth of the Palace through the Gardens, and reaching the Door which was neareſt the Fight, there left thoſe two which had not Armed themſelves, to obſerve from the top of a high Tower the event of her Deſign, to the end that if it proved not ſucceſsful, they might tell us, that we might generouſly put an end to our Lives. *Ninus* remain'd motionleſs, and appear'd as if he had loſt his ſtrength by the violence of that cruel Blow, and *Semiramis* then had a wonderful advantage, had ſhe been her ſelf; but ſtunn'd by

what

what had almoſt overwhelm'd her, ſhe remained ſome time without being ſenſible what was become of her ſelf. In the mean time *Ninus* greatly afflicted, lookt on himſelf not as alone guilty of that unhappy accident: But Traytor, cry'd he to his Sword, deeming that as guilty as himſelf, why didſt not thou turn thy ſelf againſt me, when my unhappy Arm oblig'd thee to commit this Sacrilegious Act. Alas! doſt thou not remember that when I fixt thee to my ſide, I made then a Vow never to employ thee againſt Ladies: And notwithſtanding, wretched as thou art, thou haſt made me perjur'd. Do not tell me that I ought to have known that wonderful Perſon better than thy ſelf, ſince it is certain that things altho' inſenſible, yet have the apprehenſions of a Divinity. But why ſhould I thus blame you, ſince on the other hand, it is true, that thou haſt been infinitely more favourable than my ſelf; I lifted thee up to take away her life, and thou didſt but wound her; yet in wounding her, thou haſt diſcovered my Crime, to the end that my Ignorance might no longer conceal it. Thus he ſpake without knowing more of that Adventure, than that he had fought with a Virgin, whoſe Beauty was Divine, not ſuſpecting in the leaſt that it was the Princeſs *Semiramis*. In the mean time, ſhe came to her ſelf, and finding that ſhe was diſcovered, was ſo tranſported with anger, that ſhe furiouſly ran upon her Enemy; rather

out of a desire to die, than in hopes of revenging her self. *Ninus* who had not taken his eyes from off of her Face, took his Sword by the Point, and meeting her half way, and offered it to her with great Submission; but seeing she would not abate the Severity of her Humour, and that she endeavoured to provoke him to put an end to the Combate after another manner. At least said he to her, if you will not receive this detestable Sword from my hands, as from those of a vanquish'd Person, receive it to take away my Life with that Weapon with which I attempted yours. Whilst the generous King spake thus, and that the Princess for answer gav him nothing but injurious and reproachful Language, the King of *Ascalon* understood that it was his Daughter that had resolv'd to Fight for the welfare of her Country. At first his Troops knew her not, and were in an equal astonishment with their Enemies: But when they were nearer advanc'd, they knew her better by her Voice than by her Hair. Some immediately carried the News to the King, who giving no Credit to the small appearance of it, regarded not the Report. A Maid so tender as *Semiramis*, said *Tarsenos*, to undertake a thing, which in the most Couragious of my Subjects would prove a ridiculous timerity; Oh Gods! can you believe it. It is your Daughter, answered they, and consequently is capable of the highest Resolutions; that having delighted

to

to lose her Life, nor to fall into the Enemies hands, without doubt she rather chose that way, by which she has stabbed the Liberty of her Country. These words were scarce pronounc'd, when it was confirm'd by others, and then the King wonderfully moved, went from amidst of those who surrounded him, to be convinc'd of the Truth with his own eyes. As far as he could perceive her at a distance, Nature dictated it to him that it was she; insomuch that transported with that affection which we generally have for our own blood, he out-went by much those that followed him. It was to be feared least the two Armies should joyn, and it is certain that each Party began to rally on their Princes side, when *Ninus* having already spoke to the Commanders which were advanc'd the first, enjoyn'd them to cause his Troops to retire, after that *Tarsenes* had promis'd to Command the same of his. Imagine if you please, what were the Embraces of Father and Daughter, without obliging me to a recital of such tender Expressions. Represent to your self the words which were respectively address'd to each other, unless that to satisfie your Curiosity, I should undertake to speak by the voice of Nature. It is certain that never accident was more capable to move our hearts, and that how inhumane and bloody some might be that were present, and who were only bred up in Arms, yet they could not but be sensible at that time. *Ninus* remain'd

main'd no longer ignorant who she was, from that moment *Semiramis*'s Eyes were fix'd upon his Face, his Soul was quite changed, and when he understood that she was the Princess of *Ascalon*, he was sensible of strange alterations which proceeded from the regret that he had been the cause of her shedding so many tears, and to have put her to so many inconveniencies. How subtil an Artist is Love, and what a quick advance it makes in a few moments; but he shews his greatest Skill and Power, when he unites those things which seem to be directly opposite. He often suffers despair to be ready to seize us, he permits us to walk on the very brink of Precipices, and sometimes will let us precipitate our selves, before he will exert his power. The Kingdom of *Ascalon* was lost without the least appearance of retrieve, Death was the noblest desire, and the last Remedy for its Inhabitants; and whatever was the Inspiration which our *Infanta* had, she had no other end nor design, when that Deity made appear that those fatal blows could be diverted by him, and that from the very worst of our misfortunes, which was the loss of our Princess, he could make our Happiness commence. It was from the Passions which he rais'd in the Breast of that most illustrious Conqueror, so violent in its beginning, that it is difficult to believe that it could acquire so great a force in so small a time. If I have pass'd by in silence the Discourse

between

between Father and Daughter, permit me to ſpeak of the Amorous *Ninus*, no more than what may ſerve to let you underſtand his Victory. He careſt our Monarch with a thouſand Civilities, making thoſe offers which by much exceeded thoſe Diſorders he had occaſioned in our Territories, and without ſaying abſolutely that he Lov'd, yet he made it plainly appear by his Compliments and Actions. *Tarſenes* whoſe ſurprize for ſuch an unexpected but admirable event had produc'd ſome little ſenſe of Joy in him, was not long before he felt thoſe feeble rays of Happineſs complicated: The Civilities of the *Babylonian* Monarch immediately made it apparent, which at the ſame time was made known to the People by their mutual embraces. I would, ſaid *Ninus*, that you could as perfectly as my ſelf, be ſenſible of the regret I have to have been your Enemy, as real as it is in my own breaſt, you would then find, that your Subjects have neither ſhed their blood nor tears, of which each drop is not to me a torrent of misfortunes; and would to the Gods that what has hapned at the end of the War had taken birth with it, I ſhould then have undergone as many dangers for the enlarging the bounds of your Empire, as I have procured to my ſelf in ruining of it. Our Prince could return no other Anſwer than in tears to ſo obliging a Repentance, but they were tears, in the ſmelding of which, he eſteem'd himſelf Happy, ſince

they

they were for the welfare of his Country (which he now perceiv'd was certainly) was the occasion of them: yet that generous and vanquish'd Monarch did not content himself with bare Promises, he was resolv'd to proceed to effects: He advis'd *Tarsenas* to retire, with the assurance that the next day he would make such advantagious Propositals for Peace, that he might judge that he who had the power, and was in a posture rather to sell it, would purchase it of him. When it came notwithstanding to that separation, and that he found that the fair Cause of so many Wonders was going from him, he repented that he had not prolong'd his happiness to that degree, that three or four times he was going to confess himself publickly a Captive, to the end he might follow her to *Ascalon*, and thereby to honour her Triumph by a voluntary Captivity. However he resisted the violence of that thought, and relying on his Love, was contented to conduct her with a few to the Gates of the City. It may be suppos'd, Madam, that the Prince during the little way which he accompanied the Victorious *Semiramis*, said mighty things, but whatever familiarity with which she has since honoured me, she never discovered any of it to me. I believe that as she has a Courage greater than to be imagined, and that it is usual with those who are endowed therewith, not to be easily appeas'd, hers was not so soon, as to take in good part the

converſation of him who had created her anger, and whoſe preſence, altho' in a ſubmiſſive poſture, yet rais'd it always a new. What remained of the day, was employ'd in carrying of Proviſions, of which the Camp abounded, to the City; and the Night being come, *Ninus* no longer enjoy'd a ſleep interrupted with Combates, Aſſaults and Victories, but another ſort, which was interrupted with Complaints, Sighs and Tears. At length the Day appearing, he ſent for *Merzabane*, a young Lord, on whoſe Eloquence he relied much: (Oh hateful Name, could my mouth give thee vent) and letting him know of his being in Love, commanded him to go to the King of *Aſſyrion*, and to acquaint him with it, and to agree to all the advantages which he ſhould demand, to obtain the poſſeſſion of ſo much happineſs. I obſerved, Madam, that you changed Countenance, added *Prazimene*, when I made an Imprecation againſt the wicked *Merzabane* in naming of him, and upon my recollecting my ſelf I ſee you continue ſo, which without doubt proceeds from an aſtoniſhment intermixt with a curioſity, and that you may remain no longer in a ſuſpence, I will tell you the juſt occaſion I have not to remember that Monſter, but with horror, and without doubt in reciting to you the moſt unheard of Treaſon which lately he has committed, you will remain as ſurpriz'd, as the neceſſity of the Affairs of this Kingdom will receive of eaſe and ſatisfaction;

tisfaction; since I do not believe that the News of it is as yet arrived here.

There *Prazimene* making a necessary digression from her Discourse, prepar'd the *Infanta* to receive the sad News of the Regicide committed on the Person of the great *Ninus*; and after the shedding of some tears, that the remembrance exacted from the one, and the Tragical News drew from the other, continuing her Discourse: That unhappy Favourite, continued she, having already discovered that nothing but Love could so suddainly have changed the Warlike humour of his Prince, learnt nothing of new from the Confession he made him; seeming nevertheless to admire at it very much, he did not go about to oppose it, but advis'd him to demand the Princess as a Conqueror, and not as a passionate Lover. His Reasons were strong, yet the King could not condescend to them. I would not, answer'd he, that she should be given to me through fear, I would become the Possessor of her, by the assistance of Love alone; at those words *Mer-zahane* making no Reply, dispos'd himself to obey him. His mind being wholly intent to his Master's Service, he departed without delay, resolving to make extraordinary use of the Eloquence of his Tongue, not towards *Tarsenes*, who he foretaw would receive the Proposal as the greatest favour he could expect from the Gods, but towards *Semiramis*, whose Courage he was afraid of. As soon

as

as he arrived at the Gates of *Ascalon*, he was received by our King with such Caresses which he never shewed to any before. For indeed that Crown which he thought he had lost, together with his Life, being restored to him again with peace, might well excite such Testimonies of Joy, and make him profuse in fine words to the Messenger of such good News. *Merzabane* told him in presence of the whole Court, which then was but the shadow of what it had been some time before, that he came to assure him that the King his Master renounc'd all the Pretentions which the right of Conquest gave him over his Dominions. And to confirm what he said, he was ready to restore those Cities and strong Places which he had taken, into the hands of such Commanders as he should please to appoint, to receive them in his Name. That generously and without Ransome he would give Liberty to those who by his Arms had lost it, and likewise that he was resolved to withdraw his Army from the midst of his Kingdom, to the end he might be assistant to his re-establishment, provided he would grant him one thing, which could prove but advantagedus to him; which as it would be for the future security of his Dominions, so it would serve for a Terror to his Enemies. *Tarsenes* who thought he could be Master of nothing of a sufficient value to purchase again his Crown, having made answer, that he who could take all, ought not to demand;

mand; knew that the *Assyrian* King would not satisfie himself so, and in that manner: That it was true, that the Kingdom of *Ascalon* with all its dependencies were his as Conqueror, but quitting that Title, to take upon him that of a Suppliant, there was nothing in all its extent over which he would take upon himself the Authority of disposing, but by the entire resignation thereof to him who intreated it of him. After those generous Submissions, he perceived more clearly the Intentions of the great *Ninus*, which came not sooner out of his mouth, than it carried joy to *Tarsenos*, and the whole Court. There was no need of perswasion to oblige him to give his consent, it being much above all he could expect or hope for. *Merzabane* immediately upon the spot receiv'd an Answer, which he did not expect till he had advis'd with his Counsel; and after a return of thanks, with fresh Protestations on the behalf of the King his Master, he obtain'd permission to wait on the Princess. Our King not doubting of a conformity of his Intentions from his Daughter, caused him to be conducted to her Appartment; where with an air of Sadness, or else perhaps taken up with the remembrance of what had pass'd the Day before, she received that Ambassador of Love. I hapned to be with her, and altho' I was so little, yet I made an observation of what past on the one side and the other. The premeditated Discourse of *Merzabane* pronounc'd

nounc'd with a particular grace, his Submissions on the behalf of his Prince, joyn'd with the King's consent, had been of sufficient force to excite the Affections of a Princess more severe, but for *Semiramis* those Charms could make no impression. Having at first testified that she was unworthy of the Honour, and answered with coldness enough, that the Monarch that made his Applications, lessened very much his glory by the meanness of such an Inclination. At length being rouz'd by the Answers which *Merzabane* made, she expresst her hatred almost at the same time that she expresst her indifferency with an angry yet Courageous voice: What, said she, does my Father consent to such a Proposal, which at the same time it brings Joy, (such is ridiculous when it is wrapt up in pillages and Murthers; those Fires with which this Kingdom from all parts blazes, shall they illuminate my Hymenian Torch, and from the Complaints of his Subjects will he have my Nuptial songs composed? Will he have these Festivals made at a time that his People are Massacred, and at those Festivals drink their Blood as well as Tears. In a word, does he desire to Celebrate the Day on which he lost his Crown, and thereon gratifie the greatest of his Enemies with the grant of what yet remains to him most precious. No, I cannot imagine that he can be guilty of so much Cowardize; but if it should have found a passage to his Breast,

which

which to believe, would render me guilty; can it be in his Power to compass it, that he not only consents to the Loss of his Kingdom thereby; that he not only lays his Head at the feet of his unjust Conqueror, the which he might have the Power but not the Reason to perform: But that he should engage me in so shameful a Resignation, is what does not belong to him. *Merzabane* confounded at so cruel an Answer, suffered the Princess to say all which her first transports dictated to her. He with great respect gave ear to her resentments, nor did he undertake to reply till she had made an end; then it was that he endeavoured by all his Reasons to overcome that severe humour; but the Princess impatient with hearing what he said, interrupted him on a sudden, and having assured him that she would never espouse one she could not Love, and that she could not have any other resentments than those of hatred for her Enemy; added, that if that was to be the Consideration for Peace, that she chose rather to see the *Assalonites* always in War, and to be at quiet and peace her self, than to restore them Peace, by creating to her self a continual War. That at last, if her Country should be reduc'd, and that the Fates had so ordered it, to submit to the Slavery of the *Assyrian* King, as all things seem'd to contribute to it, the Remedy which remained in each Persons hand, and the which all did not know properly to apply,

will

will at all times release her from honouring his Victory, which under the specious pretence of Marriage he would make her the chiefest Ornament. These last words were pronounc'd by the Princess in retiring to her Closet; where having shut her self up alone, she resolved to die sooner than to alter her Resolution. *Tarsenos* having understood by *Mercabane* in what a strange Humour he had found his Daughter, remain'd as well without Motion, as without an Answer. He was in hopes that the consideration of her Countries welfare,, joyn'd with the ambitious desire of being the greatest Queen in the World, without comprehending still the satisfaction of seeing her self the delight of the most courageous of Princes, would rather have mis'd in her an impatience for the completing of so glorious Success and Conquest, than a disdain to refuse it; nevertheless he remained very much surpriz'd to find thereby nothing but what destroyed that Opinion, and what put an end to that excessive joy which so glorious an Alliance had occasioned. Incertain what to answer, he remain'd sometimes in a study, when on a sudden turning to *Mercabane*, he told him that he might bear him witness to *Ninus*, whether it was his fault that those honourable Proposals which he had made were not accepted by her on whom it more absolutely depended, than on any other; that he never received a more perfect satisfaction, than by so advantagious

– a proffer;

a proffer; and that on the other hand he had never received a more sensible displeasure than by the unhandsom usage of *Siramis*. That notwithstanding he desired him not to look upon her Behaviour; and the Matter so desperate, as from an extream affection which he had made appear, to testifie an extream resentment, and that the next day he would remit into his power himself and Kingdom, or else oblige his Daughter to accept his Propositions. *Abenzabaie* departed at the conclusion of these words, and the King, after he had walk'd to and fro in his Chamber for some time, went to the Princesses Appartment, who was still in her vigorous Meditations. He spoke not to her as an angry Parent, but represented to her, that the restoring of his Crown was of less consideration than what immediately concerned her. He told her, that before the War was begun, he willingly would have resign'd his Crown to have made that Marriage, which notwithstanding would redound to her if it was effected, and that, by that, she ought to consider whether it was the Interest of her Soveraign or as her Father which he endeavour'd. That having but a small time to Live, it was to be thought, that he rather minded what concern'd her, since he was to survive in her, than what regarded him; since he found that he had lived to the extremity of his days, and that the ill Affairs of his Kingdom, as so excellent a Remedy was

offered

offered to be applied, could not be perfectly cured but by her Reſolution; that the People which ſhe had almoſt ſaved, attended with impatience to ſee themſelves thoroughly healed; as on the other ſide, ſhe ſhould forthwith ſee in his Eyes Tears renewed, in his Mouth Complaints, and his Wounds bleed afreſh, if ſhe perſiſted in refuſing to compleat his deſires. Theſe were, Madam, ſome part of the Reaſons that good Prince gave to his Daughter to perſwade her to accept of the Alliance of the great *Ninus*; and I know not whether reſpect alone hindred her from interrupting of him, but ſhe returned no Anſwer, until he deſired to know if her rigour and diſdain was not ſhaken. Then without making uſe of any other Reaſons, ſhe aſk'd him, If Kings having once engag'd their Words, ought to break or keep it inviolably according to the diverſity of Change: And the King having anſwered her, that the Faith of a Prince ought never to alter through the conſideration of his Intereſt. Oh my Lord, ſaid ſhe, what leſs would you do, ſhould you conſent to this Marriage, than to falſifie your Promiſe which you engag'd to the *Phenecian* Prince. I have been ſolemnly Contracted to him, and altho' your Faith and Word was Publick, you will ſully them by this Proceeding, which with Kings ought to paſs for the blackeſt of Crimes. I love him, my Lord, only becauſe you have enjoyn'd me to it; and had you juſt Cauſe to break off

with him, I would ceaſe to Love him, as ſoon as you ſhould ceaſe to have it ſo: But I eſteem your Word, and am zealous to have it obſerved and kept, not becauſe of *Termodonte*, not becauſe of you alone, but for the ſole Reaſon of that Diadem you wear, and that Rank in which the Gods have plac'd you; who draw from thence no greater Splendor, nor a more glorious Title, than from the Fidelity of that Prince, who is the Poſſeſſor of it. This judicious way of Reaſoning, ſtopt quite ſhort the King of *Aſcalon*; and as he was equitable and juſt in all things, I believe he would have given way to ſuch powerful Conſiderations, had not the King of *Phenicia* himſelf failed in his word. He had expreſs'd all the Sentiments of a true Lover to poſſeſs our Beautiful *Infanta*; he had been at very large and generous Expences, and had made the moſt magnificent Gallantries that a Prince of his Quality could undertake to perform for a Princeſs of her Degree; but it was at a Time when the Kingdom of *Tarſenas* enjoy'd a profound Peace and Freedom. As ſoon as the Wars began, there was no news of him, no Expreſſes came from him; whether they were ſtop'd by the Enemy, or that the fear of danger had removed the aſſurance of his Love and Paſſion. This Cowardly Action, contrary to the Oaths and Vows he had ſo often repeated, never to end his Days more happy than in the Princeſſes Service; repreſenting it ſelf to our Monarch

with

with all those Deformities which were necessary to render it Monstruous, after some moments which he took to meditate thereon, made him begin to find the Name of *Termodonte* not to be worthy to be pronounc'd by the Princess his Daughter. He said, that he infinitely approved of the desire to keep ones Faith inviolable, and that he agreed with her that it ought to be the Chiefest and Principal Vertue amongst Princess; but that it ought to be kept at a time when there might be occasion to put it to a Tryal. At length he set forth *Termodonte* with so much Ignominy and Shame, that he left no room for one word to be spoken in favour of him. In truth the backwardness of defending that Kingdom, which in right of the Princess ought one day to be his; having discovered the meanness of his Soul, rendred him so hated, that his Name was never mentioned, but joyn'd with some scandalous addition, and our *Infanta* her self never discours'd of him but with disdain. But the respect she bore to the word of the King her Father, together with the Vows made at the Altar, oblig'd her to carry her self with much rigour towards the *Assyrian* King. Having then understood the just Reason for not keeping the Word promised to so weak a Prince, she soon renquish'd his part; and yet her affection to *Ninus* did not increase; besides the sad disorders he had occasioned in the Provinces of the King her Father, there was I know

not what reluctancy in her Breast, which was suppos'd to proceed from thence alone altho' in effect it proceeded from another Notion, and which making it difficult to surmount, ought to have served for a presage of that Regicide she has since committed on his Person. But those that took it in another sense, judg'd it necessary to shew that extraordinary Persons could not be joyn'd but through extraordinary ways. The Princess back'd with powerful Reasons confess'd that *Tamudante*'s Cause could not be justified without dishonour and Reproach; and yet without confessing, that by his being thus cast off, that it added any thing to the happiness of the Victorious *Ninus*. She obtain'd then from our King one day only of delay, which was to be employ'd in framing her Resolution, after which she protested she would not dissemble her thoughts, whether it was that she resolv'd to be Cruel, or become Obedient. If during the persuasions of the Father, and the answers of the Daughter, you will spare one moment of time to think on the *Babylonian* Monarch, it is impossible but that you should represent him to your fancy in a Condition worthy of your pity. Victorious as he was, fear'd and admir'd by all, yet he waited for the Answer which *Merzabane* was to return like a vanquish'd Person, a Slave and a Criminal, he chang'd incessantly both thought and action; and his Countenance, sometimes red, and other times pale, sufficiently denote

denoted his hopes and his fears. He promis'd to himself great Matters from *Merzabane*'s Eloquence, but relied more on his own proper merit and deserts, together with the necessity of the King of *Ascalon*, but he dreaded the haughty Courage of *Semiramis*, of which he had already experienced singular proofs, and equally feared the extremity of his Love. At length *Merzabane* entred his Tent, where surprizing him in the only Company of his thoughts, and disquiets, they were not thereby a little encreas'd. There was no need to make use of any Language to let him know the Answer of the Princess he adored; the Countenance of his Ambassador sufficiently spake more than by his Mouth could be confirm'd. What Sighs, what Complaints did he not make; but above all, how furiously was he assailed with a sad Despair. *Merzabane* endeavoured not to cure his Wounds, since in using his endeavours to sooth them, he could never compass it. Insomuch that whatever powerful consolations he made use of, Love still obstructed his Reason from understanding of them, or receiving any benefit thereby. He look'd upon that as a Sacr lege, what he could by Power and Force obtain, unless it was accorded by consent and free will; insomuch that in a vanquish'd Country he lookt upon it as a Crime to harbour the thoughts of a Conqueror. At last being upon the Terms of Despairing, that Passion which created to

great disorder, became the happy genius which inspired him; and what good advice could not obtain, the transports of his Love made him meet withal. Since we can obtain from the incomparable *Semiramis*, said he to *Merzabane*, with an Action full of despair, it is a sign that we are unworthy; and since we are unworthy of her, there is a necessity that we should die. And as the Cause which has stopt my passage to that Happiness has been visible and resented by her; as I say, she was a Witness to the slaughter of her People, and hath felt the inconveniencies of an ambitious War, she ought therefore through a just compensation to be present at our Repentance, to the end she may the more resent the joy and satisfaction of our death. Let us go our self in Person, and tell her, that to the Crime of persecuting her, we have added that of temerity and rashness in adoring her, and that we will right and revenge her sufferings, and our boldness and presumption. Let us go and by a second Wound, Cure the first which her fair Eyes have made, and with a dying Sigh put an end to the Tears and Complaints of her Subjects. To pronounce those words, and wish for their execution were two things not far distant of one another in the mouth and courage of the *Assyrian* Monarch; insomuch that never in his Life was he possest of so great an impatience, as that which he suffered in expecting the next day. As

soon

ſoon as it was Light, *Merzabane* came to him, and finding his Reſolution fix'd, he told the King his Maſter, that there had been nothing wanting on his part. They departed the Camp, and he under whoſe ſhadow *Merzabane* had always march'd, hazarded at this time himſelf under his conduct, ſo well diſguiſ'd nevertheleſs, that his own Train did not know him. They entred *Aſcalon* ſome hours after the riſing of the Sun, and *Merzabane* receiv'd with as much Joy and Ceremony as he was the precedent day; he was conducted to *Tarſenos*, who altho' he very much deſired it, yet fear'd it withal very much, I mean his coming; I know not what that good Prince ſaid to him at firſt, but I am not ignorant, that demanding permiſſion to ſee our *Infanta*, he could not give his conſent without tears in his eyes. It was not that he regretted a Viſit which could not be unpleaſing to him, but being uncertain of his Daughters Reſolution, he could hope for nothing but rigour and ſeverity. The diſguiſed *Ninus* amongſt the Civilities of this reception, being look'd upon as no other than one of *Merzabane*'s Train, had but a ſmall part therein, altho' he had the greateſt ſhare in the Negotiation; and altho' the Deſign he had taken to ſatisfie the unjuſt ſeverity of *Semiramis* was not to be ſhaken, yet he could not ſo well defend himſelf from being guided by ſome ſmall glimpſe of hope. All the time he was in the King's

presence, those advantageous words which he heard pronounc'd when he was named, made him know with what earnestness that good Prince desired his Alliance; so that, that moderating the excess of his grief and troubles, made him act so that nothing might discover him: But when from thence *Merzabane* went to visit the Princess, he trembled, he chang'd colour a thousand times, and instead of following, he became rooted and immoveable in *Tarsena's* Chamber. *Merzabane* having foreseen that accident, gave not leizure to any one to observe it, he drew near him, and using him as a follower of his, said some words to him, which recovered him. Making then use of Necessity as a Vertue, the King of [illegible] followed him into our Princesses Chamber, where without the short remonstrance which still sounded in his Ears, I question if as soon as he had entred, he had not discover'd himself. Imagine, Madam, how prodigious were the efforts which at that time he made use of; and that being to partake of Actions so different, that is to say, to become attentive to all that past, and to combate with inward Enemies which very insolently attack'd him, he had not need to have been Master of an extraordinary Conduct and Courage. In the mean while *Merzabane* saluted our *Infanta*, made her new Complements still more capable to move than before, and to them received no Answer, which did not declare her extream

aversion.

averſion. Judge if you pleaſe, how often the diſguiſed King was going to execute his fatal intention. The Lips of that rigorous and ſevere Princeſs uttered not one word which was not more killing to him than the blow he deſigned; he could not ſee one Action of hers, which did not expreſs more Cruelty than her Anſwers; and I believe that the Reaſon why he delayed it for ſome time, was becauſe he was unwilling to leave her ſo ſoon, altho' ſhe was ſo inhumane; or at leaſt to ſee if her words and actions could not perform what he had reſolved. At length *Merzabane* growing more paſſionate than he reſolved to be, and loſing part of that reſpect which till then he had impoſed upon his words, was ſo far tranſported, as to pronounce in a louder tone than ordinary the Names of Victorious and Conqueror; inſomuch that the Prince to whom ſuch a ſort of threatning was too ſenſible and piercing, was going to gainſay it, and afterwards to die, when he obſerved that our *Infanta* would once more ſpeak; he had not time to finiſh the words he was going to utter, to liſten to the Anſwer which that ungrateful Perſon was going to return. It ill becomes you to call your Maſter Victorious, anſwered ſhe to *Merzabane*, when he owns himſelf to be overcome. And it is ſtill more out of ſeaſon to importune me with his Praiſes, ſince as the moſt faithleſs of all Princes, he is only worthy of an eternal contempt. I own that Victory has often

declared for him; yet you must confess with me, that at length it has abandon'd him; do you remember the Combate which I undertook against him? We agreed that if he was Victorious, the City and Kingdom of *Ascalon* should submit to his Power; but if I obtain'd the glory of it, that he should cause his Army to retire, and should renounce all those Advantages which he had unjustly obtain'd of us: Now he is vanquish'd, and the truth thereof is eminently apparent that he himself confesses it, as well as you, that now come on his behalf to own it to me; but he is unfaithful, since knowing that the Victory is mine, he notwithstanding makes pretensions to this Estate as well as to my Person. At that moment it was that the great *Ninus* would appear both despairing and in Love together; and without giving time to *Merzabone* to distinguish the word Victory, he quitted his disguise; yes Divine *Semiramis* said he, throwing himself at her feet, you are Victorious, and he over whom you have obtained that advantage, is not content with the confession which has been already made to you thereof, since he is come to confirm it with his blood. I am that vanquish'd Person whose defeat is glorious, but I am that unfaithful Prince that am covered with a perpetual ignominy and shame by a breach of Promise; if therefore that Crime alone renders me guilty; if the Reproaches which you have made condemns me, what will become of

me,

me, when you ſhall conſider what I have preſumed to do, and what ſatisfaction I ſhall undertake to make, altho' none can be greater than to die: The firſt Crime forbids me to live, and in dying I cannot attone for the ſecond. Is there any other means more capable to revenge yours? Is not one Death enough, muſt I live to die every day? Tell me, Madam, and you ſhall in my Perſon inceſſantly behold the Criminal and the Executioner, the Inſtrument of his Puniſhment, and the Puniſhment it ſelf. But what have I ſaid, whatever pains I endure, will they not offend you always, ſince you will ſtill have the fatal diſpleaſure of knowing that I live: I had therefore much better die, and mingle my blood which will be juſtly ſpilt with that of your Subjects which I have unjuſtly ſhed. I had much better offer up a Sacrifice to the Living and Dead, and by a bleeding Wound, which you may e'er long behold in this Breaſt, you ſhall in a dying Language hear the regrets of a Prince, the extreameſt of which is that he could not ſufficiently revenge your injuries. With theſe Laſt words pronounc'd with a Languiſhing tone, he drew forth his Sword, and threw himſelf on the Point of it, to make a diſmal confuſion, intermix with the effects and words; you grow pale fair Princeſs, and by that change of colour you ſeem to teſtifie a fear that the Cruelty of *Semiramis* agreed with the deſpair of *Ninus*; you imagine that he already ſwims in his

blood,

blood, and that she being insensible, did behold that sight with eyes void of Love. Recollect your self, Madam, and prosecute your former attention. The despairing Prince did not die, since that the rigour he would have inflicted upon himself did not answer his Resolution, but was reserved to touch more powerfully than all his submissions, yet that Cruelty which the King had acted on himself, softned the disdain of our Princess; and that hate and disdain of Life which he had testified, was the beginning of her Passion. It happened then that the Princess of *Assabe*, sensible to the quick by so incredible a Resolution, changed on a suddain, and felt in her breast all the smart of that Wound which Nigon was not as yet sensible of; she not only shook off that disdain which she had for that Prince, but without observing a Medium, she past insensibly to Testimonies of an extream Affection. Scorning therefore to have recourse to words to hinder her design, and without requesting of those present to disarm him, but quitting the Place where she was, she her self endeavoured to prevent the blow, or at least to render it less fatal. Most certain she succeeded, and the Gods who would render this Action Memorable, made one Circumstance Remarkable, which must never be forgot. For in stopping the arm of that happy forlorn, the point of the Sword slid in such a manner, that in making to him but a small wound, [illegible] Princesses Left hand

hand received a small hurt, and through the effect and force of their destiny, their Blood could not come out but by their mingling the one with the other together; what strange presage is this cried *Adorzame*, full pale with a fear which as yet he could not overcome, to see the blood of a Princess altogether insensible, mix with that of one so much in Love; rather say, answered the Princess, that it is a good Omen, since it is a testimony and sign of that content which I have give of uniting our Hearts. These few words were not of ordinary consequence to the *Assyrian* Monarch; it is true, that he could not receive this unexpected Change without a great surprise; it is true that some time he doubted, whether a parallel Adventure would not appear impossible; but as soon as he had enough recollected himself to discern the Truth from Falsity, and to know from what hand and mouth proceeded his happiness, he made no longer a doubt of it, but was content to find that his astonishment equalled his Joy. I have now recounted to you some of those cruel Answers which our *Infanta* made in return of those passionate Submissions of the great *Ninus*. I have likewise shewed to you the sad effects that produced; but to go further, and to discover to you some of their new Entertainment, that is not in my power. It may suffice that you know, that it was not less agreeable [illegible] and that the Excuses, Promises and

and Confirmations made up the greateſt and moſt pleaſing part. And as the ſatisfaction of thoſe two Illuſtrious Perſons was, whereon depended that of the *Aſcalonites*, ſcarce had the good King *Tarſenes* dedicated the ſame meaſure of tears to his Joy, as but juſt before he had ſacrific'd to his Grief, but the whole Court gave proofs thereof, which had no other relation to thoſe Evils, from which they were hardly delivered, but only the great exceſs there was in both; never in the moſt Flouriſhing City, and moſt Populous in the World was there ſeen more Content, then might at that time have been obſerv'd in the deſolate *Aſcalon*: but I wrong it indeed in calling it ſo, ſince ſo great a Novelty was no ſooner flown from the City to the Camp, where all the common Soldiers, and moſt part of the Officers thought *Ninus* was ſtill, but that more People might have been ſeen there, then as yet it had ever contain'd; inſomuch that thoſe who were of Opinion that nothing could be found therein fit to adorn or honour a ſlender Rejoycing, did very much admire to behold ſuch magnificence, which ſcarce could have been found there, when the City was in its moſt Flouriſhing Eſtate. Moſt certain it is, that Joy muſt be a moſt excellent Remedy; ſince it had no ſooner ſeiz'd on the Hearts of the Soldiers and People, but that it produc'd ſuch wonderful effects. Thoſe who were wounded, whoſe wounds ſeem'd incurable, and who according to the Nature thereof

in

in all probability, were to end their days in a Languishing manner, being surpriz'd at so sudden and great satisfaction, had this advantage, that they were freed from their Sufferings by a sudden death. Those whose Wounds caused an incertainty in the Opinion of their Chirurgeons, were visibly found Curable by the power of that same effect; and those who thought to have recovered their health at the end of a limited time, were deceived, in that they found it in the common and publick Joy; insomuch that the Day for so glorious a Marriage, was a Day of a general Satisfaction; and if there did appear any with their Arms in a Sash, it was more for fashion's sake, than for a real necessity.

There *Prazimene* concealing by her Silence the most agreeable part of her Story, in the relation of which a Person less modest might have boasted of their Eloquence; I would say, passing from the Splendor of the Marriage to the Consequences which usually follow, without stopping at the Amorous Discourses and pleasing Caresses of the Lovers, she made appear the purity of her Mind, by so judiciously passing over those Circumstances. Some few days after a Marriage so apparently fortunate (continued the Wise *Prazimene*) the *Assyrian* Monarch with some difficulty leaving his dear Queen, would see what was most Remarkable in the City of *Ascalon*; he visited the Publick Places, where he found several things worthy

thy of observation; but he esteemed nothing so much as a Temple which *Tarsenos* had caused to be erected. It was in effect a Building which might be called Royal in all respects; it is very lofty, prodigiously great, built regularly, and so full of Riches, that there is nothing Rare in all *Asia*, but is there to be seen. *Ninus* most surprizingly taken with it, and demanding what Deity was therein Adored, was answered by a Nobleman of that Country, that he would receive more satisfaction in Learning it from his Eyes, than to hear it; that if he would give himself the trouble to draw near to an Obelisk which he shew'd to him, his Curiosity would soon be satisfied. The King entred into a great Square Place which is over-against the Temple, and ascending certain Steps which serve for the Basis or Foundation to the Obelisk, thereon Read a certain Inscription which all the *Ascalonites* know by heart, and which was engraved in great Characters; amongst the rest I learnt it, and if my Memory is not unfaithful to me, I believe I may be able to repeat it to you.

The Inscription of the Temple of Atergatis in Ascalon.

AN Oracle having foretold to King *Teseus*, and to Queen *Deceto* his Wife, that the Heavens would shower down their Marriage with a Child, which could [illegible] the World by extraordinary ways, [illegible] become the Wonder and Astonishment of the World, as well in her Birth, as in the progress of her Life, and in her End; that they should live several years together without seeing the accomplishing of those Divine Promises: Insomuch that despairing to see themselves Live in the Person of that Child, after which they should sigh, without having any hopes of it left, they were near hand beginning to murmur against the Divine Providence, when the Goddess of Affections being interested in it, made it succeed by those ways and means which are common to none but the Gods themselves. In a Season when the Beauty of the Spring created a desire for the Country, she inspired the Queen to leave the Court,

Court, and by that abſence did effect the Reſolutions of Fate: Foraſmuch as the King of *Aſcalon*, who could not properly be ſaid to Live when ſeparated from the dearer part of himſelf, was reſolved to go to her, he left the Seat of his Empire for thoſe places where the Queen made her abode: but approaching to it, the Sovereign of Hearts cauſed him to meet with his *Dercetis*, whom the eager paſſion after the Chace had ſeparated from the reſt. Now that ingenious Goddeſs well knowing, that ſuch as are born by means of Amorous Stealths, have thoſe Advantages which a Legitimate Bed rarely produces, rendred her unknown to the King, whom he ſearch'd after, and made uſe of the like deceit towards this fair unknown; inſomuch that this mutual ignorance of each other was followed with a mutual deſire, this ſo quick and vehement an Adventure had as vehement and quick a Succeſs. *Tarſenes* accoſted his Queen, and being more Amorous than his Age ſeemed to allow of, found her more ſenſible than he could well have expected; his paſſion taking birth from the power of the Goddeſs, and his Diſcourſe guided by the ſame, met with a like and parallel Flame, and with Anſwers altogether favourable, inſomuch that what ought to be held in the eyes of Mortals as a Crime, was in regard to the will of the Gods a pure obedience. The Prince's Retinue being ſtopt by his Commands, a deſart Place ſerv'd them inſtead

of

of a magnificent place, and a Cave in lieu of a fine Chamber. But by a contrary effect, whereas before that fatal Meeting *Tarsenas*'s Thoughts were wholly taken up about his Queen; scarce had this last passion seiz'd him, but that his first Design vanish'd from his mind, and that after the enjoyment of his Queen unknown, he returned back to *Ascalon*, whilst the Queen returned to her Maids. And the Goddess having put an end to those Amorous desires, as she had already put an end to their disguise, quite raz'd out of the memory of the King and Queen the Adventure of which she had been the Instrument; and likewise that passion not only ceas'd which she had rais'd, but likewise she made *Tarsenas* lose the desire of visiting his Queen. He contented himself with the News he frequently receiv'd of her health, and possess'd with a reserv'd coldness, which the whole World had reason to admire, gave up his thoughts intirely to the Government of his Kingdom. In the mean time, as the Gods never work a Design in vain, that quickness of their mutual Affections was not unfruitful, the Queen felt their effects, which soon reviv'd her Memory. At first she consider'd with horror what her Love had produc'd, she termed that a Crime which in reality was none; and whilst none but her self was a witness of that unhappy accident, she contented her self with her Tears. But when the Eyes of others began to dive into that Secret,

Secret, she could no longer brook the Infamy thereof, but resolv'd to die, to the end she might not out-live her dishonour. Hurried on by her despair, she by Night got secretly from her Attendance, and abandoning her Palace, which heretofore she had loved so well, and which she could not leave without some regret, so severe she was against her self, that at every step she made she inflicted her own punishment; and thinking on that Faith, which she imagin'd she had violated, she sought only for some Precipice, into which by plunging her self, she thought she might wash off that Crime in destroying the Criminal. However as Fate sooner or later works by its own means, in fine she was inspired by the Gods with a regret, which suffer'd her not to consent to the loss of that innocent Creature whose Mother she ought to be; she therefore moderated her despair by the force and power of that natural Love which is due to our own blood; she made her sustenance for the support of her own Life, upon such Herbs as the Earth produced without Labour, with a design not to outlive that day in which her Burthen should enjoy the Light. The uncertainty of her steps had led her by the setting of the Sun (of whose presence she thought her self unworthy) into that part of the Forest next to the City, which Heaven had destin'd for that young Princesses Cradle, and her Mothers Tomb. There she was deliver'd of a Daughter, which she

She Suckled but once; and after those tears, with the which she wash'd her, to render her the more pure and worthy for the Gods, she gave her a Kiss, and then precipitated her self into a Lake, which took its beginning in the same Desert, with whose Waters one part of the Cities Walls are wash'd. Thus the *Oracle* began to take place, since having promised to *Tarsenes* a Child, whose Birth, Progress and End should be wonderful, its Prediction was not meanly verified in its first Circumstances. That Prince advertised of the loss of his Queen, was not the only Person who was astonish'd at it, all his Subjects took a great interest in his affliction; but as sensible as it was, he forgot not to be very diligent; he remitted his grief to another Season; and applying himself to that Care, which so great and unfortunate a Loss ought to excite in him, did dispatch from all Parts Persons to make some Discovery: He went himself to several Places, and sent as well to his Allies and Friends, as to his Enemies; and nevertheless all his pains and trouble was to as little purpose, and as unprofitable as the Tears which he shed; it could never enter into his thoughts that the Forest of *Afanides* was the Place of his Queens Retirement. At length the time for Mourning, having buried the *Afanaites*, they by degrees began to leave off debating upon so strange an Accident when as one day the Prince resolv'd to interrupt the course of his melancholy, by

by the exercise of Hunting, the Forest of *Ascalon* was pitch'd upon for his Divertisement, Gods! how extraordinary was that Chace, which instead of finishing by the death of some Wild Beast, ought to have been the Subject to adore those which Inhabited that Desart. As he was separated from the Hunters, he came to the side of that Lake which was the Tomb of his Queen, and to the same place where she had abandon'd her Child. An ordinary confusion did not seize him, when he found that Little Creature in such a frightful dwelling, but his confusion was infinitely redoubled, when he saw it accompanied by a great number of Birds, of which some appear'd to be its Guards, and the others its Nourishers; and as if they had a respect for the Father in consideration of the Daughter; contrary to their Nature, they did not fly away when he approached. The Prince took into his Arms her whom an admirable Providence had preserved; and observing something in her Countenance not like unto other Children, felt also some strange Motions which were not ordinary with him. At first he thought it the work of some Deity, so that not daring any longer to prophane it, by touching it, which he judged was not allowed him, he was going to lay it down again, when he perceived certain Jewels, which heretofore he had given to his Queen. Then he recollected his Memory, and did not only know them again,

but

but likewise perceived that its Attire was made of the most Rich of his Garments. O what addition of confusion! O what a sensible remembrance, or rather what a prodigious mixture of wonder and grief, whilst quite besides himself, he considered that Divine Infant, and those fatal Reliques, the Huntsman came to that place; but what noise soever they made, the Prince could not recover out of his extasie, till they had fallen themselves into the same; it seemed as if their Actions depended on their Eyes, or that being as it were become immoveable, their Looks were for ever fixed upon that wonderful Object. At length *Tarsenes* coming to himself, Commanded the Subject of their Wonder to be carried to the Palace, and returned thither himself full of thoughts, where he attended with strange disquiets the next day; at that time the Sun seemed more lazy than he was. A Solemn Sacrifice was prepared and offer'd, and immediately thereupon the King Commanded the most Ancient of the Priests to Consult about the Adventure of this unknown Infant. The *Oracle*, which heretofore had foretold him that his Queen should make him Father of a Wonderful Child; at that time he had little regard to what the *Oracle* had said, they were accustomed to be very obscure in their Answers, and to speak of things which had not happned, but now it spoke of what was past, but withal in terms which were not obscure. The King then knew at the re-

turn

turn of the Priests, by what means the Gods had made succeed their Promises. He understood that the Child he had so wonderfully met with in the Desart of [illegible] was his own Daughter. He understood likewise, how the same Gods had given her to him. He learnt the fatal regret of his Queen, but he learnt withal how that Heaven to recompence [illegible] Vertue, which seem'd to have received [illegible] blot by her obedience, and which had since animated her by a generous despair, had received her amongst the number of its Inhabitants, and that the great *Adad* had chosen her for his Eternal Companion. Thus his sadness overcome by this agreeable and pleasing Answer, was converted into Joy, and his Joy a little afterwards into Piety; insomuch that he caused this Glorious Temple to be built, and erected to her memory, near that Lake which she had made use of as a Path to conduct her to the Heavens, and absolutely prohibiting the use of what it [illegible] for that Consideration, gave the Name of *Atergatis* to this new Goddess, called thus Miraculous Daughter *Semiramis*, for having been nourished by the Birds; and caused this Obelisk or Tablet to be erected; to the end that being enriched with this History, it might be preserved to Posterity, and manifest the power of the Immortal Gods, whose Promises are as much infallible, as the Means which they make use of to make them succeed, are unknown to us.

There

There is what *Ninus* could not read, continued *Prazimene*, with wonder, and what according to my thoughts you have not heard without a sensible [illegible] It is true, interrupted *Azalinda*, that I never gave so much attention to any Discourse, nor never attended the end with a greater impatience than I have had for this strange Adventure, with that which you just now have entertain'd me. But first the History of the Heroick *Semiramis* made me see no one Accident, which appeared not to be but an extraordinary Adventure; nevertheless those things which you have already told me, and those which remain to be recited now, will create no more of wonder in me, since after a Birth so far from common and vulgar, those Actions which ought to succeed cannot but be extraordinary; but as curious as I am to Learn as well as you have done the particulars of so glorious a Life, I retard that Contentment through this interruption which I make; persue therefore Charming Princess your Discourse, and dedicate once more to my desire some moments to finish it; if you should not be tired more in listning than I am in entertaining you answered *Prazimene*, blushing at the Title which *Azalinda* had given her; believe most aimable *Infanta*! that you are going to learn all that I know before we part. After those Civilities, which, as yet, took up some time, the *Assyrian* Monarch beheld not this, as he had other remarkable Things in *Asca-*

lon, he entred into the Temple of *Alergatis*, where he beheld the Image of that Goddess under the Shape of a Woman from the Waste upwards, of that of a Fish downwards, and having given Orders for the Drawing of her Figure, returned again to read what was write upon the Tablets; then he thought that the great *Adad* having chosen that Goddess for his Spouse, was a presage that *Babylon* and *Ascalon* should be united together, since their People and Inhabitants ought not to be divided, whose Deities were joyn'd; and as that Celestial Alliance was made, by Accidents altogether supernatural, that Earthly Alliance, which had follow'd, could not have succeeded but by the like means and ways; he protested that he would never enter into the City of *Babylon*, without Instituting there the Worship of that Goddess, nor without Dedicating to her a Temple: And in Truth no sooner was he upon the borders of his Empire, but he gave Orders for the beginning of that Work, and that having Ordained her Worship, she was reverenced by all, but with such Devotion, that since, the *Assyrians* have held her amongst the number of their principal Deities: If that Monarch before that he understood that marvellous Birth, had passionately lov'd our Princess, he afterwards esteem'd himself oblig'd to cherish her, as well through Duty as Inclination, knowing that her Original had something of parallel w th his own; he was the Son

of

of *Jupiter Belus*, and through a consequence less Necessary than Just, Reason would have it that the Son of a God should espouse the Daughter of a Goddess; scarce were the Magnificent Entertainments ended (although the time prescribed for them had been a long time past) when *Ninus* was resolv'd to return to his own Territories; It was certainly a very cruel Separation to *Tarsenes* to part with his dear Daughter; but as it was no other then what ought to be expected, his Tongue approv'd of what his Tears could scarcely consent too; never was Day so sad and melancholy like that in which we began to depart; but it was again the more by reason that its Eve had been celebrated with so much Splendor and Joy, insomuch that when we testify'd an excessive Alacrity, it was not without considering that we rejoyced at our Tears: Our *Infanta* must have past for the most insensible in the World, had she not been affected with so general an Affection; She did indeed make appear that she shared a great part amongst them, more in reality not to shew her self Ingrateful to her Country, then through Sentiments which had an unwillingness to the King her Husband's Desire; because in giving to him her Faith, she gave it to him so Disinterested and Pure, that all things which before had been any ways considerable to her, from that moment became to her Indifferent: by her Actions of Sadness she satisfy'd the sorrowful Resentments of her Subjects; but

ſhe reſerved for her Husband effects contrary to thoſe Appearances. We made haſte through *Syria*, becauſe that part of it belonging to the King of *Aſcalon*, we could not paſs through thoſe Cities which were under his Power, without granting ſome Days of ſtay to the agreeable Importunity of their Inhabitants; but when we were arrived upon its Confines we made uſe of the Advantage of the River *Euphrates*, by imbarking upon Veſſels richly deckt, which in few Days brought us to that vaſt and populous City of *Babylon*: Permit me here to renew your Admiration, and by a few words, by which I will conſtrain my ſelf to expreſs it in, give you a Recital of the moſt admirable Dwelling in the Univerſe; all thoſe, who as well as my ſelf, who were Strangers alike to this City, remembring themſelves of *Aſcalon*, which we looked upon to be above all other Cities, immediately took the great and wonderful City of *Babylon* for an entire Region, and having ſince known that it was but a City, have conſidered *Aſcalon* but as a Village, or to Honour it a little more at the leaſt of its Suburbs. The River upon which we finiſhed our Voyage divides it ſelf in two Parts, on one ſide are many Temples, of which ſome to be the more eſteemed ought to be very Ancient, as thoſe of *Jupiter Belus* and *Adad*; ſince that, after thoſe two famous Edifices, the others in compariſon are but common Buildings, altho very ſumptuous; I ſhall forbear

bear ſpeaking of the Riches with which they are adorned, ſo great is the number that you would not believe me; I ſhall content my ſelf to tell you that beſides thoſe things which render thoſe Sacred places wonderful, there is a Tower preſents it ſelf in the middle of the Temple of *Jupiter Belus*, the top of which is ſo high that you would take it for a Pillar that ſuſtains the Heavens. In effect there is no body that caſting his Eye towards the top of it, but confounds it with the Sky it ſelf, ſo great a diſtance there is from the Earth and it; if that part of the City is altogether Sacred and Holy by the Poſſeſſion of ſo many Temples Conſecrated to the Gods, the other is altogether as Magnificent and Royal, poſſeſſing the moſt glorious Dwelling of their Kings; the Situation is ſo charming and ſweet, that it inſpires a Joy as ſoon as you behold it; its Greatneſs is conformable to the Puiſſance of its Empire; but its Building is ſo Compleat and Stately, that it equally ſurpaſſes by much, as well the Beauty of its Situation as the Space which contains it; juſt thus was the City of *Babylon*, when the great *Ninus* made his Entry with his dear Queen, inſomuch that I ſhall go no further in Diſcribing of it; it will come to paſs by and by that I ſhall add to that Magnificent Eſtate, in which we found it, thoſe pompous Augmentations which the new Queen cauſed to be added, and you ſhall learn, by the ſequel of her Hiſtory,

story, the two Reasons for which this incomparable City was Surnamed the City of *Semiramis*? Having shewn to you the Power and Grandeur of the Metropolis of *Assyria*, it would be impertinent in me to amuse you with the Crowds of People, who hindred our Entry by those rich Preparations which rendered it Glorious, and by those shouts of Joy which testified their Satisfaction and Contentment; I shall not speak of the time which was taken up in publick Showes, Dancings and Feasts, it is enough for you to imagine it, when you consider what was the City into which we entred, and the People who received us; but as I have a Design to shew to you a Life altogether Virtuous, to represent it to you afterwards in an Inclination altogether contrary, I shall not deviate my Discourse from what concerns the Queen. As soon as *Ninus* had entered the Palace, the Affairs of his Empire took not solely up his Care, he joyned thereunto the Care of causing a Temple to be raised to the Mother of his Queen, and we saw the Foundation thereof before that we well knew that we were arrived at *Babylon*. It was built on that side of the City, of which I told you before, and where there was so great a number just over against that of *Belus*, according to which model he caused it to be built, and had divine Priests and Sacrifices, conformable to those of that God, of whom according to the Oracle spoken to *Jupiter*,

ſhe was the Companion, which gave occaſion to the Prieſts of thoſe Temples to diſcover moſt wonderful Miſteries in that Heavenly Union: The Court was wholly employ'd in ſo Laudable a mixture of Affairs, Divine and Civil, when News was brought of the Revolt of that *Armenia*, which alone then paid Homage to the *Aſſyrian* Monarchy; it was *Armenia the Great*, that this Triumphant Monarch had given to *Barraneſ*, although his Father was his Mortal Enemy. *Sabatius* (that was the Name of the Author of that Rebellion) had always managed the War againſt *Belus*, and having ſeveral times defeated him, without having abſolutely conquer'd him, took it ſo much to Heart to Ruine him, that he enjoyn'd it to the Prince his Succeſſor, never in his Life-time to make Peace or Truce with him; *Ninus* kept his word when he came to the Empire, he vigouroufly purſued *Sabatius*; but as he was engaged but againſt the Father, he voluntarily pardoned the Son, when being reſolved to ſubdue *Armenia the Great*, he met him laden with abundance of rich Preſents, inſtead of defending himſelf. *Barraneſ* promis'd all that our Monarch of *Babylon* oblig'd him to; he became Tributary to him, and afterwards peaceably enjoy'd that Kingdom until ſuch time as the Fugitive *Sabatius*, after a long time came and troubled his peaceable Government, Piety giving more Courage to that Prince then he had ever ſhewn before, concluding

it would be no Crime to break his Faith for her Sake; he received then his unhappy Father, calleth him to his Councels, and this was the occasion of this War for which *Assyria* then made Preparations: On a suddain a great alteration was to be seen in our Court, the Armies took place of those Magnificent and Glorious Shews to which all the World was then given, which as I believe had not finished so soon, had not this Accident happened. The Queen perceiving that the King was preparing to leave her, could not resolve to consent to it, she dispos'd her self to follow him, and would put on his Harness when he had occasion for them; he did all he could to hinder her Design, he represented to her the Labours and Perils in which that employment engaged those that practiced it; told her it was for Men and not for Women, and likewise told her, that he should have a double fear upon him, seeing her every Moment expos'd to hazard and danger, whereas was she absent he should esteem it as nothing; but his perswasions were weak, she could not bear them without interrupting him, and did only interrupt him to put an end to so Affectionate Debate, by three or four words, My Lord, said she, if I learnt that noble Exercise in exercising it against your Majesty, ought I not to make use of it at present against other People; most certainly since I had the boldness to Combat with you, I will possess the Glory hereafter to Combate for you;

you; this Decree which her Love made her pronounce, was immediately executed; She her self took care of the Preparations for that War, and made her self as remarkable for her Diligence and Judgment in those Orders she gave, as generous in those Banquets, where the Victory always accompanied her. The whole Court quitted *Babylon* when their Majesties departed, and crossing along the Banks of the River *Tigris*, soon arrived at *Ninivie*, where those who ought not to accompany them to the Wars stayed to receive with more ease and accommodation the News: Permit me, Madam, to recollect my self of that most agreeable Place, it is too fine to be forgot, and I received there too much Honour to omit speaking in its praise. That City was of a circumference little different from *Babylon*, situated on the River *Tigris*, environed with prodigious Walls and Towers, the particulars of which I should scarce pass over in silence, if those which *Semiramis* caused to be built, does not tell me that it would be quickly to recite over twice one and the same thing, but of so sweet an Air and Climate, and all things therein so pleasing and agreeable, that all melancholy is banished from thence; *Ninus* always lov'd that City, as well for that Reason, as for the Civility of its Inhabitants, and I believe that I shall, in a word, give you to understand the Affection that that great Prince had for it; if I tell you that he honoured it with his name,

although he was not the Founder of it;
there it was that [illegible]
to cares [illegible]
and for my own [illegible]
found my [illegible]
self wearied of her [illegible]
thereto told [illegible]
had [illegible]
you know [illegible]
always [illegible]
King, and the [illegible]
ordinary [illegible]
at not proper to [illegible]
stances [illegible]
but when [illegible]
how [illegible]
weighs [illegible]
ing [illegible]
how Fortune [illegible]
her. I [illegible]
and prepare [illegible]
tunes. The [illegible]
Army depart, [illegible]
she had been: My Queen, to [illegible]
which shed, and for her own [illegible]
held me a great while [illegible]
said she, with pain. I know well that thy
Tears are occasioned by the [illegible]
to leave me, and I abuse you of my part. I
have no less an unwillingness for our Sepa-
ration, but give to my Glory what I can-
not condescend to do to thy Desire; I leave
thee in the hands of Erasmus, resolved to let
the see at my return, that I have not Loved
thee

thee in vain; that Ancient governess to whom I am obliged for the little Virtue I possess, has in charge to bestow the like care upon thee, as she had of me, to the end, I shall blush Madam to account to you those Terms the Queen was pleas'd to bestow upon me, and nevertheless I ought not to alter the Truth of the History, that fortifying in thee those rare Qualities, which naturally you Enjoy, it may be easy for thee to know whether I have cherish'd thee as I ought, since I testify to thee by the Gift I make, how much I wish for a conformity between us, which is not to be searched for but with those Persons who are extreamly dear to us; after this, my Child, she often honoured me with that Title, a time may come wherein to shew the greatness of my Affection, I shall do something for the very great; and yet notwithstanding what cannot be able to reach my Desire: At these words she left me, who was blinded with Tears, and going to overtake her Soldiers, she increased their Courage as she had done my Grief: Let us not stop, if you please, at those Resentments of Affliction, of which I began to be capable; let us leave the Discourse of my Sighs and Tears and follow my Princess to wonder at her Exploits. The *Armenians* having advanc'd to the Country of *Adiabene*, were encamped at the Foot of the Mount *Taurus* to defend the Passage and Entrance into their Country against the King of *Assyria*; but far from finding him in a weak

Condition,

although he was not the Founder of it; there it was that the Heroick *Semiramis* began to caress me more than she was used to do, and for my own part, beginning to understand my self, I endeavoured to render my self worthy of her Favour. I have not hitherto told you what a great Kindness she had for me, I have contented my self to let you know, that as little as I was I had always followed her; and although the King and the whole Court paid me extraordinary Civilities, nevertheless I thought it not proper to observe those little Circumstances, since they were paid to a Child; but when then became more considerable, how this *Semiramis*, who has never a such weighty Obligations from you, is becoming one part of the Care of *Semiramis*, and how Fortune has designed me to augment her Triumph; I must put my self in turn and prepare a long Recital of my Adventures. The same Day that *Ninyus* saw the Army depart, whose place of Rendevous she had been: My Queen, to stop those Tears, which shed, and for her own Satisfaction held me a great while entwined; My Child, said she, with pain I know well that thy Tears are occasioned by the regret you have to leave me, and I assure you of my part, I have no less an unwillingness for our Separation, but give to my Glory what I cannot condescend to do to thy Desire; I leave thee in the hands of *Ermenie*, resolved to let the see at my return, that I have not Loved

thee

thee in vain; that Ancient governess to whom I am obliged for the little Virtue I possess, has in charge to bestow the like care upon thee, as she had of me, to the end, I shall blush Madam to recount to you those Terms the Queen was pleas'd to bestow upon me, and nevertheless I ought not to alter the Truth of the History, that fortifying in thee those rare Qualities, which naturally you Enjoy, it may be easy for thee to know whether I have cherish'd thee as bought, since I testify to thee by the Gift I make, how much I wish for a conformity between us, which is not to be searched for but with those Persons who are extreamly dear to us; after this, my Child, she often honoured me with that Title, a time may come wherein to shew the greatness of my Affection, I shall do something for the very great; and yet notwithstanding what cannot be able to reach my Desire: At these words she left me, who was blinded with Tears, and going to overtake her Soldiers, she increased their Courage as she had done my Grief: Let us not stop, if you please, at those Resentments of Affliction, of which I began to be capable; let us leave the Discourse of my Sighs and Tears and follow my Princess to wonder at her Exploits. The *Armenians* having advanc'd to the Country of *Mesopotamia*, were encamped at the Foot of the Mount *Taurus* to defend the Passage and Entrance into their Country aginst the King of *Assyria*; but far from finding him in a weak

Condition,

Condition, as they had almost perswaded themselves, he proved more vigorous and stronger to them then they had represented him to be, being likewise assisted by his Queen, insomuch that our Troops took very little more pains to open to themselves a Passage into their Provinces, then to cross over *Mesopotamia*, their direct way, and which was one of the Conquests of the great *Ninus*: There the Enemies Army was presently dispers'd; there the places cost us no longer time to take them, then what served to block them up, and the People promising to themselves more Mercy from the Conqueror, then by the resistance they were once resolved to make, came in whole Bodies to submit themselves to that Yoke they had so rashly abandon'd; but Madam, what do you think render'd this Success so glorious and easie? the Memory of the dead Prince ought not to be offended, if I attribute the Honour to the Warlike *Semiramis*; yes it was she that re-establish'd the *Babylonian* Empire in those Parts, andwho not content with that Advantage, carried her Arms and Bounds much farther; it is true that that Hero was of himself capable of all those Exploits, and that having compos'd his Monarchy of so many Kingdoms, generously Conquer'd by him, he had not only learn'd the Art of acquiring, but likewise of preserving and keeping them; nevertheless at that time more desirous of the Laurels for his Queen then for himself, he permitted

mitted her to act according to her own courragious Motives, and he had no sooner conceived the hopes of a Victory, but his victorious Queen presented him with the Fruits thereof; She put her self at the Head of the *Assyrians*, and never returned from fight without being covered all over with blood, and without giving extraordinary apprehensions to her Husband, which were converted in a little time into great content and satisfaction: At Night she would surprize their Quarters and carry them by force, and in the Day-time she would give Directions for Bottels and Assaults; She caused a severe Discipline to be observed in the Camp, and to hinder the murmuring which is ordinarily founded upon dispencing with some Rules and Orders, she used the same Severity and Strictness as to her self; She presided at Councils, and sometimes permitting them to speak, who by the length of time seemed to be very well vers'd and experienc'd in that dangerous Employment, made them afterwards blush for Shame, in making them sensible of the Faults and Errors of their Sentiments, and astonished them with the Solidity of her own and oftentimes constrained them to become Envious of the Glory of a Woman; In fine, she made appear in her Person, the Courage of the young, and the Prudence of the old, the power of overcoming, and the vertue of pardoning, and by a Secret, natural to her, created both Fear and Love in their Hearts: Thus she

did

did not gain her ends and designs in *Armenia the Greater* only, but in the very Heart of that Kingdom; she rooted out the Plant which another time might have produc'd another Rebellion, it was the Prince who possess'd it under the Homage of the great *Ninus*, who absolutely vanquish'd in the late Battle, could not save himself from falling into the Conquerors Hands: Whilst that, *Barzanes* was forc'd to go to *Ninivee*, where our Monarch would keep him, considering his Revolt, as an effect of his Piety; that excellent Queen who had vanquish'd him studied new Designs; scarce had she refresh'd her self in giving new Orders to the conquer'd Countries, but she departed to add new Rays to her shining Glory, she conquer'd the Lesser *Armenia*, whether she carried her Arms, and with that promptness, that she had subdued it as soon as she had chastis'd the Greater *Armenia*, and from thence passing in *Cilecia*, took them for weak and feeble Resistances, which others might have taken for prodigious Efforts. The Neighbouring Kingdoms were not so difficult to be Conquered, *Pamphilia*, together with some other Provinces of the Greater *Phrygia*, voluntarily submitted, to such a pitch that she rais'd her Fame, insomuch that she rendered almost the whole Eastern *Asia* Tributary to our sole Power. After so great a Success, disposing her self to return to *Babylon*, she minded not to return the same way, *Gallacia* was the way she resolved

to

to take, and to continue that way, after having opened to her self a Passage in its Province on that side which was most Southwards, it was absolutely needful to subdue *Cappadocia*, which block'd up otherwise her Passage to the *Armenians* on that side; and I know not, if without that Adventure, of which the *Assyrians* said the continuance of their Fortune did depend, and which succeeded according to their Wishes and Prayers; that long Voyage which was not performed without great Labour and Difficulties, if it had entirely satisfy'd her great Mind, and if her great Courage, the Parallel of which was never known, had not engaged her to undertake new Enterprizes: This Adventure, Madam, which caused in us another sort of Joy then that which her Victories created, was such, that she found her self in a condition to give the great *Ninus* a Successor; As soon as the News was spread of it, there was not an *Assyrian* who esteemed himself less than a Demy God, they were so proud and so full of Joy, that they disposed those People to whom the Liberty hindered, the participation of that Happiness. Their Monarch, who had no less a violent Desire, had reason then to believe that his Queen was going to render him the Father of a Creature who would keep a Medium between the Gods and Men, the hopes of that on the one hand, and the apprehensions on the other, least those generous Attempts, in which she took so much

much pleasure and satisfaction, [illegible] deprive them of that Sovereign [illegible] obliged him, in the Request which [illegible] made to her, to make use of a Com[illegible] altogether Affectionate and full [illegible] Love, she was obliged then to take [illegible] to *Babylon*, under a guard, at the [illegible] which he put himself, and *Mar[illegible]* was his Lieutenant, and *Ninus*, where all my Joy had ceased by the departure of that Queen, saw an end of my Grief and Sorrow, as it had beheld the beginning of it; Oh! what Caresses did I receive, and how much did those two Instances of her Departure and Return give me Assurances of her Inclination; but I shall do wrong to two Illustrious and great Persons, who sigh'd under different Passions, if I should trifle away your time in entertaining of you with what particularly belongs to me any longer, I must, if you please, stop the Torrent of Tears of some, before I continue the Discourse of what concerns me, and likewise satisfy the Desire of others; The *Ninivites* were those that sigh'd, and who having received the Victorious *Semiramis* after so many Warlike Expeditions, would have been glad to have added to their Fame the utmost Glory and Reputation to have been able to have attributed the Birth of the first Child of the great *Ninus* to them; but observing such great Preparations for going forward, made them Despair of so great a Happiness. The [illegible]

nians the other-hand flattered themſelves of having that glorious Advantage: In ſhort both were deceived, for the Sorrowful *Ninive* had the regret to behold the departure of their Queen, and the rejoycing City of *Babylon* had the Satisfaction to receive her. The King, who had remitted the Care of his Armies to his Valiant Generals, never left his Queen, being reſolv'd to obſerve himſelf, whether a univerſal Belief might not be attended with a deceitful Succeſs.

All *Aſſyria* made wiſhes for a Prince, and *Ninus* promis'd no leſs to himſelf; nevertheleſs with what ever hopes he flatter'd himſelf, he was full apprehenſive leaſt he ſhould meet with a diſappointment in his Hopes and Deſires; but Heaven that proved auſpicious to *Aſſyria* at that time, and that would ſhower down upon that Kingdom all its Graces, to the end that it might overwhelm it at length with moſt prodigious adverſities, rejoyc'd their Prince and did not diſcontent his Subjects. *Semiramis* gave Light to another Sun, who at the Moment of his Birth extended his bright Rays to the moſt darkned and furthermoſt parts of the Empire. He was received in Cloth of Purple, which never was practiſed before, and at the Mothers Requeſt, and for her Satisfaction, the Father conferred his own Name upon him. The City of *Babylon* the Night before this auſpicious and happy Day, reſembled ſome of thoſe Mountains which caſts

caſts out Fire, ſince there was not one little place or corner therein, where that Sacred Fire did not give Teſtimony of the great Joy of its Inhabitants, and yet the Nights of Darkneſs did not alone partake of thoſe publick Rejoycings, the Days took their turn, inſomuch that it was a long time before ſuch time as the Sun could exhale any of thoſe Vapours he was us'd to do, to the end that he might give Light without interruption to the Sacrifices and Feaſts: In the mean time our Princeſs thinking thoſe Hours tedious which were not employ'd in encreaſing the Glorious Empire of her dear Spouſe, had ſcarce brought into the World a Son, but ſhe importuned him to return to his Conqueſts; it was not without an extreame violence upon her ſelf, that ſhe took that Reſolution, it was not, I ſay, without having a wonderful Reluctancy in her Thoughts, mixt with her Requeſt; but as ſhe had already overcome ſo many Enemies, ſhe would add to her Triumphs the Victory ſhe obtained on this occaſion over her ſelf. *Ninus* took leave of her as ſoon as ſhe ſaw that ſhe was in a fair condition and way of being well, and with promiſes to be with him as ſoon as her Strength would permit; he departed from *Babylon* to go to meet his Armies, which had already obtained great Advantages in thoſe *Eaſtern* Countries, where he had cauſed them to march. *Merzabane* did not immediately follow the King, he was commanded to remain near *Semiramis*,

mis, who ſince her Marriage, had always a kindneſs for him. Moſt certain it is that he was poſſeſt of ſuch Qualifications which would unavoidably make him eſteemed; but amongſt others he had one in conſideration of our Queen, which alone was capable to attract her Inclinations, even when ſhe would not Honour him therewith. He was employ'd by the great *Nhmac* to obtain her Affections, yet although he did not abſolutely ſucceed, nevertheleſs his procedure was with ſo much Judgment, that at the ſame moment ſhe became ſenſible of the Hero's Love, ſhe thereupon had a good will for his Ambaſſador; nevertheleſs to what purpoſe ſerves a ſupport to thoſe Courages where there is nothing but apparent Virtue, it was better that their Fortune depended on their Conduct, then to be ſupported by a Foundation which one dares not ſhake, the proceeding of the Sacrilegious *Merzabane* was a parallel to this true Reaſoning. As ſoon as he had followed the Fortune of his Prince, by thoſe ways where Virtue alone could march, he acquir'd the Friendſhip of my Princeſs; by ways accordingly he likewiſe continued in the ſame way of Virtue, by performing ſeveral glorious Actions for ſome time; but when he was ſenſible that he was throughly eſtabliſh'd, he neglected to act well, and in ſome little time followed that courſe which was moſt natural to him, and which had admitted of interruption, but to attain to that high

Station

Station to which he was then arriv'd. I have already ſhew'd you the Reaſons I have to ſpeak ſo of the moſt abominable of Mankind; I have perverted the order I ought to have obſerved in the recital of this Hiſtory, to let you know the Subject of it, I return now again to continue ſtill thoſe praiſes which as yet remain due to the wonder *Semiramis*: It is to be thought that the Abſence of the great *Ninus* did ſenſibly affect her, altho' occaſioned at her own Requeſt, ſince he was no ſooner gone, but ſhe fell very ill during the light-headedneſs, tho' hearing ſhe made appear the Affections of her Mind, and what poſſeſs'd more her Thoughts, for ſhe fought with her Enemies and overcame them; but above all ſhe made appear during thoſe Ravings, how dear the Victorious *Ninus* was to her, as well by the frequent calling upon him, as by the Apprehenſions ſhe made appear ſhe was in for him. At length, after ſeveral Months that ſhe was forc'd to keep her Bed, the Court, which by her Indiſpoſition was become extreamly afflicted, began by degrees to reaſſume its wonted Joy, as her Health returned to her; It was not immediately that ſhe Recovered what her Sickneſs had cauſed her to looſe, inſomuch that ſhe might not remain idle, ſhe diverted her ſelf in adorning the City of *Babylon*. I have already given you an Account of that Place, as I ſaw it when the Queen made her Entry the firſt time, and ſince then I have made no other

mention

mention of it. I ſhall not diſcribe to you the Accompliſhing of that Work, which for being accounted amongſt the moſt noble Works, has nothing of common with all the other illuſtrious Buildings of the World. The Queen began her Undertaking with Walls which did not only ſerve as Ornaments to the City, but likewiſe rendred them capable of reſiſting the greateſt Force either of Engines or Armies, and ſhe was ſo far from raiſing them upon the ſame place and foundation of the firſt, that ſhe cauſed them to be carried on at a wonderful diſtance to add to its Beauty. Wonder not, Madam, when I ſhall tell you that they were fifty Foot broad, and two hundred Foot high, the truth whereof being ſo manifeſt in theſe our Days, that it may be confirm'd by millions of Witneſſes that have beheld the ſame, their Materials were Dug out of the Ditches which incompaſſed them, by reaſon whereof they were very deep and large; as *Semiramis* was reſolv'd to fortifie them as well as to adorn thoſe Walls, ſhe cauſed a certain Earth, deſigned for this work, to be made into Bricks, which being burnt in the Fire, gave them a Colour never known before, which ſhe cauſed to be laid ſo one within another, by a ſtrange Cement taken out of a black and ſmoaky Lake. Theſe Walls have often been the Place for our Walking, ſince ſix Coaches could go abreaſt without any inconveniency, from whence we might behold a moſt

agreeable

agreeable Prospect; a hundred Gates of Brass of prodigious Strength are hung to those Walls, to the end that one may enter therein from all Parts, and fifty Posterns from each side of the City to go down to the River *Euphrates*; and to this two hundred and Fifty Towers, built for the Defence of the Walls, and proportionable to their wonderful heighth; but forget not to take notice that in that part of *Babylon*, Dedicated to the Gods, the Queen caused a most stately Castle to be built, much more Magnificent then that of the King her Husbands; to the end that on each side there should be a kind of Fortress; there is nothing so agreeable fine as those two Edifices, the one beholds the Rising, the other the Setting of the Sun, and the River *Euphrates* alone, which separates it forms the East and the West; three Walls of the same materials with that which incloses the City, surrounds the Last of these two Pallaces; but whereas other Fortifications designed for Arms, strikes Terror into the Beholders, the Sight of this creates a quite contrary effect, and not only pleases the Sight, but charms the Mind by the famous Battels, diversity of Chances, and the great number of different Animals, which you may observe painted in Colours the most natural.

There amidst divers Statues are those of *Ninus*, and the Heroick *Semiramis*, whose extraordinary Shape hinders the Surprize of the Sight, which at first would make

one

one take them for their Originals, did not that remarkable difference exceed the Liveliness of Art. They are accompanied with a Leopard and a Lion, both shot through with Arrows by those two Divine Persons, and Nature is so perfectly imitated, that it seems as if those two furious Animals had but just received those mortal Wounds, and were not as yet expired. If from this Discription I should pursue the continuation of this History without speaking of an Obelisk or Pillar, which to believe it for what it is, ought to be seen (in comparason of which, that at *Ascalon*, whereon is Engraven the miraculous Birth of my Queen, is but an indifferent one) most certain I should have thought, that I had told you nothing. It is 150 Foot high and of a proportionable bigness, insomuch that all Strangers who consider it, never admire it, without admiring at the same time how it could be brought from the Mountains of *Armenia*, from whence our Queen caused it to be brought, and how they could raise it in the fairest place of *Babylon*, since it seems apparently that in the erecting thereof, there was no use made of any Engines. There wanted nothing to this incomparable City then a Bridge for the easier Communication of its Inhabitants on both sides, which tell then were forc'd to make use of Boats. The design was soon taken, but I question whether they were longer in building of it then in the Undertaking, since it

was

was finiſhed almoſt as ſoon as every thing was got ready for it: Do not however conſider the quick Diſpatch thereof, as the Effect of a ſmall Expence. I can ſay, the *Euphrates* alone was worthy of ſo noble a Bridge as the City of *Babylon* was alone capable of ſo magnificent an Ornament: It is prodigious, Madam, to believe, that what ſhould ſeem to be the work of an Age, for all manner of Strength, was for *Semiramis*, but the work of a ſmall time: Yes, in one Year, or little more, ſhe began and finiſh'd all theſe Wonders, and if I recount them to you in the great, it is leſs not to let them appear to you in diſorder, and with a diſagreeable Aſpect which they appear in, when they are not perfected, then to expreſs the wonderful Diligence with which they were finiſhed: Beſtow on them nevertheleſs, all that wonder and admiration, retain ſome part of it for thoſe ſtately Gardens into which I am going to lead you, they are ſo great that eight Days will not ſuffice to behold thoſe charming Rarities; whoſe Foreſts were entirely cut down and raz'd to be Re-planted in thoſe Places, inſomuch that in their beginning there were Trees as ancient as Time it ſelf; their Walks and Flower Gardens are Journies, their Fountains and Canals are Seas, and I can ſay nothing but what may be confirm'd by the ſight of them, ſince without going out of them you behold all the Rarities which are to be found in all the Parts

of

[illegible]

Father, when he endeavoured to dispose her
Will and [illegible] the Countess
the [illegible]
the Charms of [illegible]
fels of [illegible]
I cannot tell if the effects were [illegible]
with the [illegible]
grounded [illegible]
which was [illegible]
and which [illegible]
Courage or want of Love since; whether
that Prince was agitated by an extraordinary
fright, or rather that the Passion which
seem'd to have dispis'd was re-kindled in his
breast, by the impossibility of attaining to his
Satisfaction, as it ordinarily falls out, to slight
easy Conquests and admit of an increase of Love
in the midst of Difficulties; so it fell out, that
from the Minute he heard of that unhappy and
Tragical Marriage, he took no further care of
his Kingdom, and weild not longer his Sceptre, but as a heavy Burthen; Dispair follow-
ed him every where, and his softest Direc-
ons were become insupportable to him, and
whatever Resolutions he took, by which he
might endeavour to compose himself, or to ad-
minister Consolation to his Mind, he found
them as vain and useless as ready to vanish
from his Mind. At length finding no Reme-
dy for the evil he created to himself, he had
recourse to Death; but such a sort of Death
which the Violence of his Passion could
to make choice of as an excellent and
al means to put an end to his Sufferings; he
knew well enough how to frame any ill
on the Bed of the Victorious Ninus, was
means to provoke all Asia against him,
that generous Conqueror could almost call
self the
standing
Though
em.
our Co
absence
Building
duced
ther a
self the
by Infa
Love;
consider
and ra
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sion for
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Treaso
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great,
tho n
to the

self the absolute Master thereof; notwithstanding which, it had [illegible] into his Thoughts, but he [illegible] upon the Enterprize. He was diligent to learn what passed in our Court, informed [illegible] of the absence of our Prince, and that Condition the Buildings our Queen had Undertaken, had reduced the City of *Babylon* [illegible] together a powerful Army, [illegible] himself the surprizal of it. It [illegible] by *Infanta*, that nothing which is operated by Love admits of Delays, the wisest and most considerate of Men becomes the most violent and rash, when animated by that Passion. *Thymodonta* seeing all things in readiness, which blinded by his Folly, he had given Orders for, he left the City of *Tyre*, and accompanied with an Army, whose courage was not inferiour to its number, march'd directly through those Countries, which separated his Provinces from ours, with such good order for the Execution of his Design, that his Couriers always put a stop to the Knowledge we should have received of this march. We were surpriz'd at the end of one of the longest Nights in the Year, and we beheld the Enemy with us before we had heard any thing of them; there was no occasion for Machines or Engines to enter, there was a breach ready made, insomuch that that part of the City Dedicated to the Gods fell immediately into their Hands, without that the Gods to whom it was more particularly Dedicated, seem'd to oppose so Sacrilegious a Treason. They say, that Crimes committed through excess of Passion, be they never so great, still admit of some Apparent Excuse; although nevertheless that Heaven had consented to the surprizal of *Babylon*, yet surely it would

...ment ...

...

...

Hair hung so curling [illegible] until [illegible]
as she had [illegible]
[illegible]
If [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
the Palace [illegible]
overcome [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[

fall, was it not possible that thy Heart had hatch'd dissembled Designs, without coming hither to manifest them to us? Thou unnatural Rival of the greatest Monarch upon Earth, we know that by the justice of thy Death, the *Ninus* alone is worthy of the possession of *Semiramis*: Till then *Thermodonte* did not know our Princess, whether it was that the Wind which blew against his Visage had hindred him from seeing that part of her Hair which she would not bind up, or that heat which enflames the Warriours in combating caused him to observe nothing but those Places where the Victory might the more easily be obtained; but as soon as he had uttered these last words, which he heard distinctly, it seem'd as if he prais'd the Gods that he did not die without Learning the Happiness of his Defeat, and that he adored those hands which took from him his Life after having bereft him of his Honour; it was I say, but by an Action that he explained his Thoughts, because that without giving him the Leisure to frame one single Word: The Victorious *Semiramis* cut off his Head to send it to her Spouse. In the mean time the Troops which had followed her, were posted at the Entry of the Bridge, to Dispute the Passage with those which followed the miserable *Thermodonte*, and which were not as yet past, insomuch that by the charge they sustained in so advantageous a place for so small a number, gave time to the Queen to bereave the guilty *Phenician* of his Life.

Whilst the Combat lasted, the Enemies attack'd, and were defeated themselves with a great deal of Courage, and perhaps had it continued much longer, the *Babylonians* had preserv'd their Courage, but lost their Force: But when

when the Criminal *Thermodon* had receiv'd his just due for the pains he [illegible] Joy fill'd the Hearts of every one, and [illegible] half defeated the Enemies. The [illegible] was this our wonderful Princess, who alone was capable of making our good or ill Fortune, throwing her self in the midst of her Enemies, they learn'd to consent to their own overthrow, by the disorder they were in as they fled; none of her blows were in vain, all proved effective, and that was the least which only gave a mortal Wound; animated by an Example so rare and so worthy, the People made use of all things for Arms which they could lay hold of. Insomuch that there was so great a slaughter in that part of the City where the Enemies had begun to perceive the Victory, that it was a difficult matter to march to any other part but [illegible] and to behold any little [illegible] was not of blood, and this glorious Act contributed to the [illegible] the Walls of the City of *Sardis*, which otherwise they had in vain acquired by so many great and lofty augmentations, if in the surprizing the Infamous *Thermodon*, her Virtue had not powerfully preserved it.

The Gods in the same time were prais'd for a Victory, which they did scarce dare to hope for, their Temples were all open, and all their Altars laded with Victims, insomuch that the Slaughter of so many Beasts serv'd to return thanks for those of so many Men. The Queen coming forth from [illegible] Devotions [illegible] would not give order [illegible] she had [illegible] dispatch'd a Courier to carry the News of this Adventure to our Monarch, the Head of his

[illegible] Rival be [illegible] by him to whom [illegible]

[illegible] Physician.

History of Pyzdmahe and Melidore

HItherto the Actions which I have [illegible] have appeared to you as a [illegible] Pompus and Vanye; (for the future) [illegible] satisfy your Curiosity, which [illegible] tiped, [illegible] to you a [illegible] of which the [illegible] are not [illegible] which still [illegible] more [illegible] lustre, then [illegible] have given [illegible] you may behold Love triumphing [illegible] extraordinary ways and methods, and while it is endeavouring to Unite [illegible] Hearts to [illegible] you will observe those rare Qualities [illegible] you have just now admired, [illegible] and quite alterable and different from what they were. It is true, that as the Rayes are not [illegible] such Vertues together are often [illegible] with [illegible] Vices; but one may say [illegible] there is a Medium by which those two [illegible] of Imperfection [illegible] and contribute to each [illegible] that [illegible] but now [illegible] you [illegible] make use of [illegible] to [illegible] of Vertue and Glory to the dangerous Precipi-

ces of Infamy and Shame: I leave you to judge, Madam, if a Person so Virtuous and deprav'd, as could possibly be, seeing such ill Examples and so frequent, could not make provision of Abominable Habits, Customs, and if consequently a Person whose Mind had not as yet contracted neither Virtue nor Vice, would not meet with what to form an excellent Temper: As for my self, whose Youth had always had for Object such a prodigious number of wonderful Actions, and which without Vanity was generally studies to imitate and follow when continually appear'd before my Eyes, then what was unknown to me; I can say that through Inclination I imitated what abundance of other Persons embrac'd through good manners, insomuch that without being dazled with the brightness of so glorious a Planet, I could behold steadily its Light, which others could scarce look upon the Reflection thereof. I cannot tell whether the care I took to render my self altogether conformable to the Humour of my Princess, was the cause of that kindness she shew'd me, or whether by a secret Harmony in our Genius, she was engag'd to continue her Favours towards me, but of all Mankind having no regard for any other then for Men, of all our Sex, she considered none but me; insomuch that from thence one might conclude that her Affections like her Virtues were singular and entire, whilst I receive every Day wonderful Proofs of her Kindness, that the whole Court regarded me, [illegible] and Envy for my great Reputation, the glorious Name gained [illegible] which he took undertaken against [illegible], over which he had obtain'd a Victory, which any other but himself could not so easily have perform'd,

the stately City of *Babylon*, proud of receiving her Monarch in Triumph, made great Preparations for his Entry, wherein might be observ'd all the utmost Endeavours of a People that would participate in the good Fortune and Success of their Sovereign. The Queen under that Dress, of which she alone was worthy, I mean under that, which would cause the whole World to recollect in their Memory her most generous and glorious Actions, went to receive him some Leagues from the City, accompanied with all her Maids of Honour and other Train, dress after the same manner. And I cannot tell, Madam, if I dare to say that it was my Beauty which made those Impressions, of which I shall speak of for the time to come, since possessing no longer any thing that can be called agreeable, you may have reason enough to blame my Vanity, or whether the extraordinary dress, which I then wore, did not help to lend me some becoming Graces, which were not natural, or whether more likely the Report that had spread it self of me all over *Assyria*, rather for the great Favours I enjoy'd from the Queen, then for any particular Merit of my own, had prepar'd those Arms; However it was, two young Princes of the glorious Race of *Ninus*, who had taken their Birth amidst the Wars, and had been bred up altogether in the Camp, and who being arriv'd to be most experienc'd Commanders, came to learn the Art of Courtship and good Manners, received at the same Instant one and the same wound by their Eyes, innocent as I was of the Evil which had befel them, I did not perceive it, I minded nothing but those admirable acknowledgments which the great *Ninus* gave to his Queen for the Head of *Thermodunt*, and

whilst

whilst I was taken up in observing those great Testimonies of Affection, [illegible] were sware, immediately after we took the way to return my Lodging, and either through Design, or by Accident, there happed to be as many Lords in the Kings Train as Ladies in the Queen's, and therewith made a certain composure which was look'd upon as the finest part of that publick Entry, of which I shall take no further notice. Only was this Order, that a Lady being accompanied with one of those Lords, other Couple [illegible] did not mount in the same Train, [illegible] a Cavalier followed her who went before him, and the Lady which he had by his side followed immediately the Cavalier which went before her, thus this Order of Precedence [illegible] strictly observ'd from the Queen her self to the lastest her, [illegible] in my Fortune, instead of being [illegible] rest, by a Knight Cavalier, I was accosted by the two Princes of the illustrious House of Assyria, who being Vitorious over an Army of Ismaelites, combat themselves at the same time to be overcome with Love, being carry'd away. Suffer me to [illegible] three Interwoven Passions, where the extremity of Passion on the one hand, and civil Indifference on the other, was apparent in such Terms as were not common. One of them to whom himself more [illegible] by that means to endeavour [illegible] recommend [illegible] in discourse [illegible] on this [illegible] coming [illegible] at the same moment they [illegible] Love, or talk of any good Opinion which I might

[illegible] of his Rival, with [illegible]
h'is Companion and Brother in Arms, [illegible]
t'o those great Objects, he had proposed [illegible]
give them the Title of [illegible], pretended
never to have [illegible] that he would [illegible]
wonder and excellency of which would [illegible]
of no equality, thereupon they [illegible]
and not without a great deal of Ambitiousness to
maintain what each of them had said, by par-
ticular Observations which they had made, and
of which they beg'd of me, with a [illegible]
flattering and [illegible] to [illegible]
them, to judge thereby which had most reason
to esteem himself above his Competitor. I
did not comprehend what signified their Dis-
pute, which had not reason'd so obscurely
I had been Master of a greater Eloquence;
and I undertook to make them understand
their [illegible] I found them [illegible]
long time, I began to wonder why they were
silent one to the other, without so much as
thinking in the heat of their Affection, to
use those fair Inforcements of Love, without
Artifice? them, answered no more than formerly to
my Discourse, and seemed, that they would know
from me, which was the most agreeable, either
the Sighs, whether, or the Tears we have remarkt
Courage, or that we have observed in the Let-
ter before they could resolve upon it, as that
after they went no further in their Declara-
tion of Love. [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[

ers which I every Baron beginning again to
follow their mutinous way of Living. The
King would consider the particulars of those
detestable Buildings which his Queen had
caused to the fundamental Laws of his Empire, which
still there he had only beheld in a confusion.
He found nothing in them, which was not
equally Judicious and Stately, which frequent-
ly drew from his Mouth great Praises; but
when he came to that wonderful Bridge, up-
on which this despairing Lover had his
Life in his Hands which he escaped, he was
altogether amaz'd, and what Violence soever
he put upon himself, in endeavouring to speak,
he could never find Words capable to express
his Thoughts; after having consider'd the
place for a long time, which after a Silence
should have been broken by him, [illegible]
[illegible] he [illegible] that the Queen
[illegible] and the unhappy Prince of Morocco, [illegible]
ended, that one in the same Volcano, [illegible]
which that great Queen was in when she over-
threw her Enemy, and the other in that
[illegible] Palace of [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[

from the Queen, and from whom I could not indure to be absent, no more than she could suffer my being from her. As the very first Word he uttered, he put me in Mind of what had past at that very Moment that the Envy of our Monarch into Babylon had oblig'd them to separate themselves from me. Madam, said he, with as much Love, but much more respect than at first, if I did not hope to obtain, by words alone, the Pardon which I am going to Demand, the Confideration of their Majesties, who are present, would never hinder me to enjoyn them Cautious of the perfumed Humility: Yes, if it is not enough to confess the double Indiscretion that I committed when I had the Honour of seeing of you the first time, which was insolently to speak in your Presence, of the effects of my Courage, and to appear before your Face without that Respect which is due to you, I am altogether ready to throw my self at your Feet and publickly to own before the whole World the Crimes I have committed in particular before you; if at that time I had had a little more Experience, concerning that manner of accosting me with the first Conversation, which this Prince himself Commanded, I might have understood that he had made use of the Advice of some confidant, who better instructed in the Commerce of Affections, had undertaken to make him succeed; but as I was incapable of so much Reason, by the Defect of certain knowledge, which, as yet, my Age could not furnish me, I answered him [illegible] in the Sharpness of an Infancy, [illegible] which hindred [illegible] but that my Answer was acceptable enough to him, since had it been other than it was, he had

had too much of Pallion in his Air; but this I know, that it satisfy'd me, that I seem'd more astonish'd at what he accus'd himself of, than satisfy'd with his Submissions: and it is true that as I had no manner of Interest in the Dispute of *Alcanor* and *Malandante*, I did imagine that they were under no manner of Obligation to make their Excuses to me. *Alcanor* nevertheless press'd me upon that matter, and altho' he might perceive very well how very ignorant I was in matters of that nature; yet he did not forbear to shew himself all impatient, at the time that *Malandante* came to interrupt his Protestations and his sighs. He had receiv'd from his Prince some secret Command, insomuch that he could be time enough back to be of the Company when the King left the Palace; and whether he was dissatisfy'd that *Alcanor* had met with so favourable an occasion, or that he was jealous of the softness of my Answers, he could scarce have command enough over his Passion, as to make the Violence of his Language submit to the Discretion of his Voice, through the Respect to those great Personages, who must have heard him, had he taken the Liberty of speaking in a louder Accent. I am sorry said he to me, that for having so happily taken his time, an Affection, which can never equal mine, has found so easy an admittance into your breast; since I am certain that the first Impressions are the strongest: But, Madam, if that Misfortune is true, which seems too apparent to me, permit me to accuse you of Injustice in your Choice of a Servant, and to add that had your Judgment acted in that Choice, *Malandante* could never have complain'd of your preferring *Alcanor*: As

these

there is no need of too much Knowledge to be offended at so insolent an approach, it was not my want of Years which hindred me from answering to it as I ought, but the Respect I bore to the Blood of *Nemours* moderated my Resentment. I constrained my self thereupon, and without making appear that I was angry for his rude and insupportable Behaviour, I told him with coldness enough, that having no intelligence nor understanding in those matters of which they spoke to me, that therefore the one had no more reason to draw any Advantage from my Answers than the other. *Armagnac*, who observ'd all my Words, and who by the Freedom with which I had heard him, had flatter'd himself with some hopes, found too much of softness in my Answer, insomuch that he began to be of the same Opinion as *Malicadante* had express'd, since instead of ill treating that Prince, as his impertinent Language deserv'd, it seem'd to him as if I had constrain'd my self to moderate his Passion: Now behold him as Jealous as *Malicadante*, and altho' they were equally indifferent to me, yet they failed not to become Enemies, through a Confirmation belief, which all on a suddain render'd them pale, perplex'd, mistrustful, and without Conversation, as they us'd to do.

I was much over-joy'd that we were oblig'd to retire almost as soon as the youngest of those Princes came up to me, because whatever face I forc'd my self to put upon the matter, I was in such a confusion to hear their Reproaches, that had they been more Polite, or of a quicker Understanding, they would never have shewn themselves so ready to follow those fatal Insinuations, which since has occasion'd all their Misfortunes; I was no sooner

ner got to my Ch[illegible] I understood
my self upon w[illegible]
get upon
and
beg
with
gig
thos
serv'd
done
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tion
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ever
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w
nity to
me. But wh[illegible]
to suffer real Torments to satisfy our A[illegible]
which is but a Bleeding in Apprehension
engage my
to live
besides having too much of sincerity
Dealing in me ever to be guilty of Dissimula-
tion, I would not give place to
nity to the Prejudice of my Conscience; let us
fun the Scrutiny
our
fro
a
cur
of
ha

so knowing; and without all doubt I had not so eatily got loose from those Meditations had not *Erminia*, under whose Government and Tuition I was, came in and interrupted me: Why, my dearest Princess, said she, do I behold you this Day so melancholick? What occasion has oblig'd you to so dangerous an Alteration? How much do I desire to know it, that I may apply a present Remedy to it. Believe me, Madam, it is not my Age which excites me to this Curiosity or Inquisitiveness, I know that we are generally accus'd for pretending to intermeddle in all things, but I protest to you, that I am at present far from being guilty of that Vice, and that it, through a pure Affection, which obliges me to desire the Knowledge of your secret Retirement, and Musing. The Experience she had in abundance of things, made her think without doubt that my Youth had been surpriz'd by some pleasing and agreeable Object, and that although I was as yet very little capable of an amorous Resentment; yet it might cause in me some uneasiness, insomuch that to prevent any such Disorder, as she had apprehended, she would not defer her Assistance and Advice. I would not give her any longer time to pursue her Discourse, I freely declared unto her the two several Conversations of *Melcandre* and *Leanor*; unto which she added, that I should take care not to occasion my self, in the Absence of those two Princes, what by their Presence they could never effect: For, said she, an Object sometimes hath greater force, which is at a distance from us, than when they are near us, and that we for them, because then selling them with all Liberty, we consider things more exactly, and if we have any Simplicity or natural Affection

for

for it, it encreases in proportion by frequently meditating on it. For that Reason I answered I ought rather to think no more on them, for as often remembring creates Friendship, it is to be believed that where there is nothing but Reluctancy and Aversion, the same remembrance is the Foundation of Hatred. I agree it, said she, and yet notwithstanding which, you ought entirely to banish such thoughts, because whether it fall out that you may either Love or hate in either cases you will infallibly be possest of one of those Passions, but to think to be possess'd of either without unquietness, is impossible, and to be disquieted and troubled without loosing something of an agreeable and excellent Humour, is as impossible; therefore to avoid falling under such an Accident, which I call a great unhappiness for a Maid, but more particularly for one of your Quality and Rank, it is absolutely necessary to live without any Passion, which you can never do, if either Love or Hatred possesses your Mind; she applyed after these several other Considerations, altogether worthy of the Charge she was intrusted with, all which tended to nothing so much as to possess me with an Indifferency; because that as she would on the one hand hinder any growing Inclination, so on the other she would not give way to any manner of Aversion or Hatred, to the end that if it pleas'd their Majesties to Marry me to their Blood, I should thereby possess nothing in my Mind that should oppose or be contrary to their Intentions. Well, Mother, said I, for so that Name I was us'd to call, when I perceiv'd that she had done speaking, I assure you that they shall be indifferent to me, if I can have so much Power over my self as not to Hate them; and

from

from that Moment, laying aside all manner of Childishness, I new modelled my way of Living, and took upon me a more serious Method. Which notwithstanding, my Age might have dispens'd withal. However the Jealousie of the two Rivals, Errors had taken its beginning from the facility and calmness, with which I had received their Conversation, increas'd by the Difficulty they found ever afterwards: *Lenor* thought that with Discretion I favoured *Malcadoute*, and *Malcadoute* tormented himself with the same Opinion: If they happen'd to meet one another in my Company, while I treated them without any manner of difference, they still imagined that I acted in that manner not without Design; and if by chance I cast my Eyes upon one of them, he that received it, look'd upon it as an Affect of Distinction, whilst the other thereby encreas'd his Torment and Pain. At length being no longer able to retain the Violence wherewith they were transported, the wonderful Affection which they had had for each other began to diminish, insomuch that their Loves put an end to their Friendship. It is easy to judge, Madam, that this Disorder ended not so; and I believe that by that very word you will apprehend that I shall speak of a Duel: That way of proceeding is so common, that as soon as one says that a Man of Courage is offended, ones thought immediately explains the rest. *Lenor* received then a Challenge from *Malcadoute*, and just at the same time that that Prince had sent a Gentleman on his part with one to him; but as they were come to the last extremity for those one or both must have lost their Lives, they were part and the same Accident confounded

into

into the Presence of their Monarch, who had
so ordain'd it to be. [illegible] Princes
said he to them, with an [illegible]
his Words, do [illegible] one
another, whilst you employ your Va-
lour daily against the Enemies of my Crown?
Why would *Meanor* look'd like *Malcontento* has
so often murder'd? and why will *Malcontento*
be guarded of what *Meanor* has to whom it
owes all the Remains of his Blood and the
Hazard of his Life? tell me the occasion of this
bloody Understanding, to the end that you may
approve of it if it be Lawful, or condemn it
if grounded upon an unjust Foundation. Great
King, answered *Meanor*, since your Majesty has
commanded us to declare the Subject of our
Quarrel, know then, if you please, that
Report is the occasion of it. How, said *Pha-*
ramond, by reason of a Report would you put an
end to that good Understanding which Nature
and a conformity of Manners had engag'd you
in, and by that single Reason, offend both the
Gods and Us; it is most certain, great King,
that a bare Report is the cause of all these
Crimes. Oh ye immortal Gods! said *Pha-*
ramond, who are these perfidious Parties, who by these
means would make a Triumph both upon our Glo-
ry and our Blood; be they who they will,
Traytors, as they are, whether Subjects or De-
pendants, we will preserve our Royal Fa-
mily by the Example of which you would make
use on the like occasion. Ah! mighty King,
interrupted *Meanor*, with an Oath to your
words! Alas, how [illegible] it might be
you can [illegible] Request did not
abate [illegible] the Impatience of the like
motive moved by *Malcontento*, complained his
wonder; he remained sometimes silent look-
ing

ing upon them; at last testifying by two or three words the confusion, which their Request had put him into, he commanded them to explain themselves effectually, it was then that *Malcalonte*, without making use of any Dissimulation, discovered to the King that Love had caus'd their Dis-union. My Lord, said he, the fair Eyes of *Praximene* having made a Report to the Advantage of *Alcanor*, have rais'd such a Despair in my Mind, which has reduc'd me to the extremity which you blame so much. Oh! most mighty Monarch, interrupted *Alcanor*, give no credit, if you please to the suppositions of my Rival: Alas! it is to me, that fair Eyes of *Praximene* have discovered the Advantage which *Malcalonte* has obtained over me, and it is that fatal Report, which has made me endeavour either to put an end to my Life, or to his Happiness. The King, Queen, and the whole Court were so extraordinary surpriz'd by this Contest, which was altogether New, that every Body remained silent; *Ninus* sometimes considered his divine Spouse, and sometimes the Princes, and shuting his Mouth, which he had often opened, kept back those words, which he had almost half uttered, to give still some further Instance of Admiration of so agreable an Adventure. At length, Princes, said he, you have had Reason to hinder us from joyning an Oath to the Design which we but just now had taken, since instead of executing of it, we should have offer'd it to our selves, to have avoided being forsworn; be satisfy'd, that we shall never disapprove of your Affections, provided that you regulate it better for the future, and that the Contents of the one be not the Ruine or Loss of the other; you alone are worthy

worthy thus to raise up your Courage, as *Prezimene* alone is capable to inflame such noble Hearts. But since it is impossible that this excellent Passion should be exempt from some Defect, which is blindness, we will not suffer you to be Masters of your own Conduct; it is we that will take the Charge upon our selves of it, to the end that the Interest which equally touches us, may make us proceed with all manner of Equity: It is thus then that we intend to make you agree. A Beauty may well be desir'd by all, but ought to be possess'd by one alone. It being so, one of you two must take a Resolution worthy of your selves and equal to the Fortune of the other. Madam, continued he, addressing himself to *Semiramis*, be pleas'd that *Praximan*, who is not without Reason so dear to you, give peace to these two Warriors: They have too much Love and Generosity to believe that the one give place to his Rival, and I should be very unjust should I make use of any preference between them; let her therefore be the sole Arbitrator of this Difference; let her fair Lips pronounce this Day Sentance in favour of her own Inclination, from whence they shall not pretend to appeal to their Swords; I shall put no longer time then this Day, to the end that he whose Misfortune will oblige him to shew himself the most Couragious, may not have in his Mind an Enemy which may in time grow too strong to be Conquered. The Queen, whose will was the same with the King her Husbands, consented immediately to the Proposition; the two Princes themselves oppos'd it not, but the King was not contented with their simple Promise, he oblig'd them by solemn Oaths to confirm their Words and Promise. As soon as they had

sworn

sworn by the Principal Divinities which we adore, and that they declared themselves Criminals of High Treason, if they transgrest or broke their Oath, I was sent for with a Charge given, not to make me acquainted with what had past. I was conversing with my Dear *Erminia* when *Cleiante* entred, and I believe that our Discourse at that time was the same which we had had before upon the Subject of the two Princes, being far from thinking, that it was upon their Account I was sent for, and without informing my self what it was that their Majesties desired of me, I made haste to obey, but was very much surpriz'd to see *Alcanor* and *Malcadonte*, who both chang'd Colour as soon as they perceiv'd me, that Disturbance and Alteration made me doubt something, which had it not hapned, I had not blush'd as I did. The Queen having commanded me to approach her, she Kiss'd me, it was her Custom so to do when I presented my self to her, and having beheld me for some time, the King sent for you, said she, to be satisfy'd by your own Mouth of a Truth very important to his Repose; Do you see, continued she, those two Princes? they have just now accus'd you for having engag'd them to fight by I know not what sort of Reports which you have taken Pleasure to raise; do not make use, My Dear Child, of any Dissimulation, to the end that your Crime be not render'd greater by an Obstinacy which you cannot Excuse: She had begun this Discourse very seriously, however she could not finish it in the same manner, since adding those Words of My Dear Child, with which she usually honours me, altho' I was altogether unworthy of so high a Favour, she mingled with it a Smile which took off all manner of Severity: Ah!

Madam,

Madam, answered I with Tears in my Eyes, and embracing her Knees, defend my Innocence against so Malicious an Imposture, it is not truer that you are the greatest Queen upon Earth, then it is certain that their Accusation is false, and intirely to confirm it, demand of them, if I do not render my self Criminal in requesting that Trouble, if every time when they would have spoken to me, I have not escaped from them, to the end that I might not be obliged to hear their Importunities; I assure my self that they will not have the boldness to tell a Lye before your Majesty. Our King observing that I shed Tears in good earnest, and that I had not taken the words which the Queen had said to me in the same manner as she had meant it, was resolv'd to add something to it, to receive some more satisfaction from the simplicity of my Answers: I am apt to believe, said he, that your Mouth has not committed the Crime of which you are accused, but if it is laid upon your Eyes, will you maintain them to be Innocent.

I remained sometime without answering, but not so long as to have notice taken of it: My Lord, said I, at length, the Eyes speak not, and yet I have right to maintain mine, as little guilty as my Lips. The Eyes, added the King, have a Dumb Language, which is not a little Eloquent, but Eyes like yours have such an extraordinary Eloquence, that one single glance pronounce Oracles, and imprint them in our Hearts: Without any further feigning, that great King changed the Discourse, not to give me any greater perplexity; he gave me to understand, to what a dangerous Action *Alcanor* and *Maladonte* had carried themselves because of me, and that because as yet they were not become the most subtil of Lovers, altho' they were the most engag'd, they had grounded their Quarrel upon Fancies,

which my Eyes and ſome of my Actions had gi-
ven birth to; that to avoid the Miſchief fro
whence they were hardly got out, he judg'd it
neceſſary that I made Choice of one of them for
my Knight, and that being near to the Age in
which we begin to be ſenſible of Affections,
I could not diſpoſe of mine to Perſons more
deſerving. There it was that I wiped my Eyes
to tell him that I was not capable of ſuch an
Ambition, that theſe Princes being of his blood,
it was rendring them unworthy in engaging them
to ſerve me, and that the Appearance having at
firſt ſurpriz'd them, there wanted but a little
Conſideration to make them aſham'd of a De-
ſign ſo little glorious in it ſelf. No, no, ſaid he,
ſo much Humility cannot be receiv'd, if you are
ignorant of what you are, I will preſently inform
you, in aſſuring you that they will meet with no
inequality; *Prazimene*, you will do nothing to
the Diſadvantage of your Merit, when you ſhall
make Choice of one of theſe Princes to be your
Servant. I knew well by this Diſcourſe that the
great *Ninus* had a mind to know my Thoughts,
inſomuch that being preſt again by the Queen,
my inexperience and want of Age made me ſpeak
with Liberty, that I had nothing but indiffe-
rency for them, and that the only Method to
gain my Affections was not to Love me at all:
Since then, ſaid the *Aſſyrian* Monarch, that nei-
ther of them are agreeable to you, both of them
muſt equally by the Length and Quality of their
reſpective Services, endeavour to obtain of you
what as yet you will not give: Oh! my Lord ſaid
I, innocently, if it be your will that I muſt re-
ceive the Affection of one of theſe Princes, I
find it much better for my Repoſe, to ſuffer the
Importunity of one alone, then to be perſwaded
by both together; I ſhall then, ſince it is your
Majeſties Pleaſure, make Choice of him that

comes neareſt to my Humour, aſſuring the other, which will not have the Diſadvantage of being my Knight, that I do him as great a favour in not chooſing him, as he who ſhall carry that Quality and Title, may one Day have but little Satisfaction, when he ſhall with leſs Paſſion conſider the excellence of his Birth; every body aſtoniſh'd to her me ſpeak thus, attended with impatience the Judgment I was going to make, the King and his Dear *Semiramis*, who had not taken notice of thoſe Words of Importunity and Perſecution, which an Innocent boldneſs had encouraged me to ſpeak, wavered in the diverſity of Opinions, ſometimes giving the good fortune of Choice to the young *Alcanor* and ſometimes to the violent *Malcadonte*, and I believe they would have been very well ſatisfy'd to have found two *Prazimenes*, for the content of thoſe two Princes, but none ſhewed, by the frequent changing of Colour, and by inequality of Actions, the wonderful Power of Incertainty, ſo much as the Rival Princes, ſometimes flattering themſelves with Hopes, and ſometimes diſpairing through Fear. As for my part, who made not that Choice by Inclination, I remained altogether uncertain, and endeavoured to diſcover ſomething agreeable in the one, which the other was not poſſeſs'd of, to make uſe of for an Excuſe to him that ſhould think himſelf diſpis'd or ſlighted: At length the young *Alcanor* having made appear much more Diſcretion then *Malcadonte*, in the firſt diſcoveries of his Amours, thought he ſhould expire with exceſs of Joy, when he heard me pronounce from my Lips, what my Heart could never have conſented to: *Malcadonte*, although he was engag'd, in conſideration of his Oath, could not be ſo much Maſter of himſelf, but with a loud Acclamation pronounc'd theſe remarkable Words, Unjuſt *Prazimene*! Happy *Alcanor*!

canor! Then regarding that Prince with an incens'd Brow, and from thence turning them on me, and at length on the whole Company that was present, without saying one word, he quitted the Room, having first paid his Respects to their Majesties. Whether it was that every one was for *Alcanor*, or that they were still thinking on what I was now telling, but there seem'd little or no concern or trouble at *Malcadontes* displeasure: The King himself, who perceiv'd that contrary to his Promise, he gave some signs of some evil Action, swore, that should he execute it, he would resent it to the highest Degree. *Alcanor*, who believ'd that he beheld beneath him, not only all the Grandeurs of the Earth, but likewise all the Felicity of the Gods, beheld with scorn the greatness and power of their Majesties, he became so puffed up with what I had pronounced in his Favour, that he answer'd but very little to those Applauses and Praises that was given him by every one; after having return'd Thanks to the grand *Ninus*, and the wonderful *Semiramis*, he approach'd me to render those respects which he kept for me alone, and which he would not offer to those Royal Persons: I was oblig'd to receive them, having prefer'd him to *Malcadonte*, but I was not for that Reason engag'd to Love him, since that Choice was made through Obedience and Respect; I was forc'd after that to permit his Visits, and to agree that his Colours should be mix'd with mine, and as he every Day undertook a thousand Gallantries, and that he made it no scruple openly to confess that those things were performed for Love of me; they begun to call me his Mistress and to think that e'er long I should become his Wife. In the mean time the Disconsolate *Malcadonte* retired from *Babylon*, and every one spoke diversly of his Absence; when being advertis'd by his

Friends

Friends that *Ninus* was offended at his Retirement without his leave, he returned immediately. The Day after he made his Appearance at Court, he took a Walk that Evening in the Stately Gardens of our Queen, I was just entered with the Discreet *Erminia*, and I was come to wait upon that great Princess who had sent me word that it would be her Walk that Night. The Place is so large, Madam, that how many soever goes, and if they do not appoint a certain Place, it is a very hard matter to meet; insomuch that the Queen had sent me notice that I should meet her at the end of the Flower-Walk; that same Walk is so called because you cannot see a Tree which is not loaded with all sorts of such as a Flower-Garden is inrich'd withal in the spring-time, insomuch that you have there the most agreeable Confusion of sweets in the whole World, nor is that the least of the Beauties and Ornaments of that most delightful Place, by whose Industrious Invention had undertaken to cause those Trees to bear so many different sorts of Flowers instead of Fruit, receiv'd a recompence answerable and worthy of so wonderful a Rarity. I took then the way to that Walk; when *Ermenia* made me take notice of two Men that followed us. As soon as I beheld them, I disdain'd to consider them farther, having observ'd nothing in them but what was very common, the one being habited like a Soldier, the other like a simple Inhabitant of *Babylon*. You do not know, Madam, said she to me, why I give you this Trouble, it is because at the very Moment that we were entred here, I saw these two Men in the first walk, who seem'd to attend the coming of some other Person; but scarce had they discover'd us, but he who has no Arms said to the other, she is there; You was then busy in telling me something, and altho' I still gave at-

tention to what you ſaid, yet I oftentimes turned about, to diſcover if it was of you that Men of their Condition and Appearance was ſpeaking, they have perpeatually followed us, inſomuch that I interrupted you to obſerve if they followed us ſtill. I am very apprehenſive, ſaid I, of *Malcadonte*'s Return, and I fear, that having ſlighted his Love, leaſt he ſhould undertake ſomething beyond the Reſentment he has already made appear; by this Advertiſement I was frighted and I doubled my pace to render my ſelf quickly near the Queen; when *Alcanor* croſſing the Walk in which we were going, ſaw us. He came up to us, and I can ſay that his Company was never ſo acceptable to me as at that time, I gave him likewiſe ſo to underſtand, ſince my Fears oblig'd me to accept of it, with a Countenance leſs ſerious then what I was us'd to receive him withal. I am come from the Caſtle, ſaid he, but having not been happy enough to find you there, and not being ignorant that this Evening you would by your Preſence grace this Garden, I came with hopes to be happier in the Night, then at the end of the Day; ſince I gave my ſelf the Vanity to believe that I ſtould have the Honour to re-conduct you from a place to the which I had not waited on you. I was going to Anſwer to the Civilities, when the apprehenſion from which I thought I was freed return'd moſt powerfully upon me. I perceived *Malcadonte*, who followed with a Dozen or Fifteen of his Domeſticks, came full upon us by the ſame way as *Alcanor*, and who by his hatty and precipitate ſteps ſeem'd not to approach us to make his Compliments. Mother, ſaid I trembling to *Erminia*, without doubt you have foreſeen the Misfortune which is coming; I believe that theſe Men which followed us, and who now appears here again, were laid in Ambuſcade by the Prince *Malcadonte*.

What

What do you fear Madam, interrupted *Alcanor*, do you miſtruſt that this Perſon, envious of my Happineſs, will attempt any thing to diſpleaſe you; no, no, Madam, if he has any Deſign it is againſt my Perſon, and if he does not execute it now, I ſhall owe my Life to that Reſpect, that deſperate as he is, he finds himſelf oblig'd to pay you. *Malcadonte* came to us at the end of thoſe Words, and addreſs'd himſelf to me: Do not think it ſtrange, ſaid he, if I commit before you Actions becoming a deſpairing Perſon, ſince it was you that reduc'd me to the Condition I am in. I know that I am going to violate the Reſpect due to this Sacred Place, and that my Prince will never Excuſe the Crime I am committing; but what avails it, whether he puniſhes or he pardons me, if I have undertaken this action to ruin my ſelf in my revenge; and why ſhould I reſpect this place? Sure I have a deſign not to reſpect your Perſon; It is not that I pretend to extend my reſentment to your Perſon it ſ lf, but am only reſolv'd that it ſhall break out before you. Then it was that *Malcadonte* making a ſign to his Followers, drew his Sword, and throwing himſelf upon *Alcanor* headlong, was ſeconded by all thoſe who accompanied him, inſomuch that that Prince, whoſe Cuſtom it was generally to be alone, expecting no other aſſiſtance then from his own Courage, put himſelf in a poſture of defence without Hopes, nevertheleſs, but of Valiantly Dying, I could never have believed, that the Courage of that perfidious Man which had rendred himſelf as Illuſtrious by the greatneſs of his Actions as by his Birth, could have been guilty of ſo baſe an Action; aſtoniſhed as I was, or rather half dead with fear, I ceas'd not to repreſent unto him with Tears and Prayers, the ſhame he would procure to himſelf, thereby adding thereunto, Threats, and Calling

for help, when those Two Men which had raised a Jealousy in my *Governante*; and who, nevertheless, had no hand in this unhappy piece of Treachery, came in, and joyn'd themselves with the most glorious Party; I know not said he, which seem'd to be the Soldier, and whose face was too Beautiful almost to be a Man's; which side I ought to take, not to act any thing against Justice, but apparently it cannot be, with the greatest number, since it would be unjust to attack one single Man so advantagiously. This generous unknown Person, had scarce made an end of speaking, without giving a presage of the Victory; one of the most desperate of *Malcadontes* Troop fell at his Feet, with a Wound not to be Cured. As soon as the Companion of this unknown Person, had seen some Arms lye useless on the ground, he laid hold of them, and if he did not make use of them with so much Address and Courage as the former, yet he did act with as much Affection. *Alcanor* finding his Forces renew as well as his Courage, by this unlook'd for Assistance, quitted the trunk of a Tree, where he had posted himself to have no Enemies but before him, with a furious look searching out the Author of this perfidiousness, was going to reduce him to terms, never more to prove a Traytor, when one of these Murtherers surpriz'd him, and run his Sword quite through his Body. He did not fall as soon as he receiv'd the blow, but returning on a suddain to revenge his Death, pierc'd his Murtherer through; but by reason of his strength that fail'd him, all he could do was to run his Sword in, but could not draw it out. The Prince being fallen, he who had made use of the Arms which presented themselves, immediately bore him Company, insomuch, that there remained but the Soldier with a will and power to defend himself. When he saw himself alone,

he

he had ſtill ſix Enemies remaining, ſome being Dead upon the place, and others being retired by reaſon of their Wounds, and which required the utmoſt diligence, both for their Flight and for their Health. But as if it had been his wiſh, it is now, ſaid he, that we ought to make appear what we are to the Eyes of the moſt Beautiful Creature in the World, and that none ſhould partake of our Glory, but her whoſe preſence will render us Victorious. I do not know Madam whether that generous Language which was followed by the like Effects, ſtruck Aſtoniſhment in the guilty *Malcadonte*; and the ſmall remainder of his Traytors, or my Cries which I redoubled, without having power to fly away; ſo great was my fear, made him think of his retreat, or rather having undertaken nothing but the Murther of *Alcanor*, and ſeeing his intentions were performed, he had now no other deſign but to ſave himſelf; inſomuch that he took the ſame way he came, but not without leaving ſome of his behind him, which the unknown ſaved both the trouble and time for flying away. Judge a little if you pleaſe, how great muſt their ſurprize be, that came to behold ſo great a Slaughter, in a place where the leaſt Inſolence committed was Death: But repreſent to your ſelf, how great was their Aſtoniſhment when they beheld me in *Erminia*'s Arms, with all the ſigns of a Perſon juſt expired. Some went to advertiſe the Queen of it, whilſt others ſeized upon the Conqueror, who made no reſiſtance. The Queen immediately quitted theſe Diverſions, ſhe uſually took amongſt Ladies, and with that innocent Troop, came to the place where ſo much Blood had been ſhed. I was juſt come out of that fit, wherein the firſt that came did ſee me; inſomuch, that caſting my Eyes upon Her Majeſty, who was got to the Soldier that was ill uſed and treated

by all, finding him alone alive, and his Sword in his hand, I cryed as loud as it was possible, to the end that by my Prayers and Entreaties, she would put a stop to those Indignities which was offered to that generous Stranger. Madam, said I, permit not that Hero to suffer any Injury; had you been present to have been a witness of those wonderful Actions he has perform'd, you would bestow on him more Praises than now you do Threats. The astonish'd *Semiramis* coming nearer to me, understood not without some difficulty on my part, the Injuries of the one, and the Innocence of the others: She learnt, I say, the Bloody Perfidiousness of *Malcadonte*, and the Courragious Defence of *Alcanor*; but above all, she admired the wonderful resolution of the unknown, when I told her, that without any other Interest then his own proper Generosity, he had sustained the force of those Traytors of which the lesser part was saved, the greater having lost their Lives by his Valour. The testimony which I gave of the Virtue and Courage of the Soldier, being again confirm'd by the presence of so many dead Persons, was the cause that made the Queen give him his Liberty, with words more obliging then the Revilings he had receiv'd. But whatever care was ordered to be taken for the cure of his Wounds, he would never consent, until such time as he had known whether the Prince for whom he had run so great danger, and the other which had accompanied him in this Glorious Actions, were yet among the number of the living. He was the first that observ'd that there was sign of Life in *Alcanor*; and for an increase of his satisfaction, he was no sooner come near the other, but he found him in the like station. Whilst every body was imploy'd to assist him, I beheld him with great Attention, and whatever Subject I had at that time not to find any thing

agreea-

agreeable, yet I perceiv'd in him the ſame things which the others admired. I beheld an extream Youth, and I likewiſe beheld ſomething more accompliſh'd in him, then in all the moſt agreeable of our Courtiers, and that which in them did not appear, or make a ſhew without artifice or ſetting off, ſhin'd forth with advantage in his Perſon, in the ſimple eſtate in which he was found. I ſee very well Madam that you would interrupt the order of this Hiſtory, to demand of me who in reality was this unknown; but if you deſire to know my good and bad fortune as it has hapned to me, you muſt at preſent remain under the ſame pain as I was in at that time, and attend the Sequel of my Adventures to underſtand the Secret. The aſſiſtance which was ſent for in all diligence arrived on one ſide, whilſt the *Aſſyrian* King came up on the other, becauſe the Queen had ordered by the ſame Meſſengers which went for the Chyrurgions, to give notice of the ſad Diſaſter which had hapned to him; ſcarce had that Prince beheld *Alcanor* in that Condition, but that the Tears dropt from his Eyes; and when he had underſtood from my mouth, that *Malcadonte* was the Author of that Bloody Maſſacre, he continued to ſhed the ſame through regret, that ſuch a Traytor ſhould proceed from his Blood. Several Cares were upon him at one and the ſame time: That of making an exact ſearch after *Malcadonte*, and of thoſe who had followed him, was the firſt which he gave Orders for, the reſt which followed in conſequence, were to command that *Alcanor* ſhould be carried to the Palace where he in Perſon would ſee his Wounds ſearch'd, and to enjoyn that the two unknown Perſons were not neglected.

All theſe three Commands were executed with ſpeed, but the Firſt had that advantage over the others, that it gave not a great deal of trouble

to

to thoſe who undertook it. They followed the way which *Malcadonte* had taken, by reaſon of the Blood which was ſo remarkable; and went as far as the Gate, which they found open, and which only ſerved for thoſe who uſed to open the Gates of that place. There they ſaw a great deal of Blood, but they could trace it no further; which made the offended *Ninus* to conjecture, that the Traytor, with thoſe who had aſſiſted him, had put themſelves into Coaches, which attended at that Gate, to the end that they might find out no further the way they had taken. Whilſt His Majeſty was thinking of the means to keep his Vow which it had pleas'd him to make when he compell'd me to receive one of thoſe two Princes for my Cavalier. I retired to my Chamber, where I was meditating on *Malcadontes* deſpair. The truth on it is, the indifference I had for him and for *Alcanor*, ſoon ceaſed: I had for the firſt, nothing but Averſion and Hatred, but for the ſecond, I had a great deal of Pity: But when I went further, and obſerv'd all the Circumſtances of that Adventure, I cannot tell you whether it was Inclination or Pity which mov'd me to the third; however, I will voluntarily confeſs, that I had not an indifference for him; I took up more time in repreſenting him to my imagination, then in bemoaning the poor *Alcanor*: And if I imploy'd ſome moments in deteſting the Treaſon of *Malcadonte*, I paſt whole hours away in praiſing the Courage of the Stranger. *Prazimene*, ſaid I, in interrogating my ſelf, and from one Reflection paſſing to another, doſt thou remember the words which the generous Soldier utter'd, when he that accompanied him, and the unfortunate *Alcanor* had taken place with thoſe whom he had then Conquered? It is now ſaid he, that we ought to make appear what we are to the Eyes of the moſt Beauti-

ful

ful Creature in the World, and that none ſhould partake of our glory, but her, whoſe preſence will render us Victorious. Alas! to whom did he Addreſs this Diſcourſe, was it to *Erminia*? No, her Age which has left her nothing but her Virtue, forbids me to believe ſo. To think likewiſe, that the Vanity of Fighting in the fineſt place in the World, and which ought to have been reſpected, as the Majeſty of the Prince had obliged him to hold that Diſcourſe, is altogether inconſiſtent, inſomuch that there is nothing ſo apparent, as to believe that he would ſpeak it of thee. Yes *Praximene*, that brave Soldier had thee in his Thoughts; ſince as thou entreſt into the Garden, the ſame *Erminia* did obſerve, that the other who imitated his Courage with abundance leſs Succeſs, ſaid to him, in ſhewing thee, ſhe is there. I had no ſooner concluded in favour to my ſelf, but that the remembrance of his Wounds gave me a great deal of fear. The Compaſſion which I had for *Alcanor*, and the Averſion for *Malcadonte*, had now no ſhare in the Affections of my Soul; that Apprehenſion baniſh'd them intirely; and nevertheleſs, I had ſcarce aſſured my ſelf that this unknown Perſon thought of me, but that new Fancies raiſed in me new Conſiderations.

What ſaid I, it ſeems to me, as if I ſhould be ſorry, if the Perſon who has occaſioned my thoughtfulneſs, ſhould have uttered thoſe words which I have ſo well retained in my Mind, for any other Intention or Cauſe, then what I have juſt now been imagining. Alas! do I no longer remember who I am; I have diſdained and ſlighted the Services of Two great Princes; nay, I have even thought that I recompenc'd their reſpects too much, if I beſtow'd but one thought upon their Affections; and now my Thoughts are entirely taken up with the Actions of a com-

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mon Soldier. Gods! can I imagine, that he ſhould have the boldneſs to caſt his Eyes upon me. He may poſſeſs eminently thoſe qualifications which I have obſerv'd in his Perſon, and that he is Maſter of ſecret Perfections, ſtill greater, and more excelling; and that he by far, exceeds all that can be called valuable amongſt us: After all, he is but a ſimple Perſon, if he has not that advantage by Birth, which may Intitle him to Crowns and Scepters; and I ought to look upon him but with the ſame Eye as others do, if he be not guilty of that Crime, which but juſt this moment I was glad to ſee him Convicted, inſtead of becoming an Object of my Hatred and Averſion; if from deſire only, he goes beyond thoſe Bounds which his own condition ought to preſcribe to him. You ſee me now Madam quickly chang'd, ſince from the fear I was in about his wounds, I paſt over to the ſatisfaction to ſee his Pride and Boldneſs puniſh'd. Nay, I added thereunto, the wiſh that his Wounds were incurable. But I did not remain long in that humour: My Thoughts, whatever violence I put upon them, could not agree with my Wiſhes; and I was contented, that recovering of his Wounds, he might be cured alſo of his criminal Affection. By this diſcourſe fair Princeſs, you may underſtand that I wanted not for Vanity; but you will likewiſe know that I began to be ſenſible, and that that Deity, whoſe power I look'd upon to be but a Chymera, was reſolved to revenge himſelf of me, for the little reſpect I had hitherto bore to him; ſhe had rendred me the dear Object of Two Princes, and having ill uſed them, ſhe has rendred an unknown Perſon, who appears to be of the moſt ordinary condition of Mankind, capable to ſurpriſe me, and to raiſe thoſe Doubts and Perplexities in me, which are the infallible ways to engage me. Whilſt they are applying remedies to *Alcanor*'s

Wounds,

Wounds, and thoſe of the unknown Perſon, a view was taken of thoſe who belonged to *Malcadonte*'s Party, which remained upon the Spot; there was not one found, who by the loſs of his Life was not puniſh'd for being concern'd in that unhappy deſign; Inſomuch, that *Ninus* who attended to be entirely inform'd by the mouth of one of them, which might be the leaſt hurt, and likewiſe to know where their infamous Leader was retired, ſeeing his hopes on that ſide defeated, increas'd his Reſentment. He diſpatch'd away Meſſengers to all Parts, with Orders to the Governours of the Provinces to ſieze upon him in any place where they met with him; and in the mean time, confin'd all the Domeſticks of that Prince which were in the City. As ſoon as *Alcanor* began to amend, and that he was out of danger, that King gave Liberty, and was the firſt which went himſelf to ſee him: But being ſenſible that he would excuſe himſelf for having drawn his Sword in the Gardens of the Pallace, he told him, that defending ones ſelf, being natural, the Gods themſelves would not be offended with thoſe who had ſhed Human Blood on their Altars, provided it was in repelling the ſurprizes of their Enemies, and not in aſſaulting of them: He added, that he would revenge that Inſolent Perfidiouſneſs, and that *Malcadonte*, although he ſhould fly to the extremity of the World, ſhould not thereby avoid that Puniſhment which he had prepared for him. *Alcanor* overjoy'd to find himſelf ſo well in the Opinion of His Majeſty, intreated him to add to thoſe Favours, one more which he would implore of him; and which although of no great conſequence, yet nevertheleſs, would be to him as great as any he could grant him. The King did not ſtay for the end of his Prayer, in order to promiſe him, he interrupted him, to tell him that

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there was nothing but what he might eaſily obtain. Then did the Prince with all thoſe Actions of Humility which his Weakneſs would permit, return Thanks to the Monarch for his Bounty of which he owned himſelf unworthy; and declared that what he had juſt then obtained, was nothing elſe, but to ſee in his own Bed that brave Soldier who had hazarded his Life for his Preſervation. He was not ignorant of the Care which had been taken of him, becauſe that was the firſt thing which he concern'd himſelf about as ſoon as he could ſpeak. *Ninus*, who would not ſuffer him to languiſh for the performance of his Requeſt, after having beſtowed a great deal of Praiſe of his Humour, ſo remote from Ingratitude, cauſed the unknown Perſon to be tranſported from the Chamber where he was, into the Princes; and becauſe he would be no hindrance to thoſe Civilities which he would render him, he retired as ſoon as that was done. I am going to tell you of a Converſation with which I was not acquainted till ſome time after, and which nevertheleſs, I will tell you in its courſe; it being no leſs Remarkable then the Occaſion which gave Birth to it. *Alcanor* held in his Arms for a long time, him whom he could name no other then his Preſerver, and had made him a thouſand Compliments, if the exceſs of his Joy would have permitted him to pronounce more then ſeven or eight words. But the unknown Perſon receiv'd theſe Teſtimonies of an extream good will, with Anſwers more Civil then Affectionate, for he would not commit any Action with which his Conſcience might reproach him, nor betray a Prince ſo Generous. It ſeems to me ſaid *Alcanor*, as if my Friendſhip was a Burthen to you; or elſe being more Judicious and Wiſe, then Inſenſible, you receive my Careſſes as feigned and diſſembling Teſtimonies; Oh! dear defender of my Life!

Life! do not do me that wrong; it is true, that almoſt all thoſe who are environ'd with greatneſs, are ſubject to that dreadful Vice, and that for abundance of Services, they have nothing but apparent reſentments of them: But this *Alcanor* who ſpeaks now to you, and who is owing to you for his Life, ſwears by that which you have preſerv'd, that Diſſimulation never had any acceſs to him: When he promiſes his heart, he immediately gives it; but he gives it accompanied with all that is in his power, and it is that which he conjures you to receive. My Lord, anſwered the Stranger, permit to ſay that I never made ſo unjuſt an opinion of you, that Vice is common but to thoſe whom good fortune favours, and from being very Mean and Low, raiſes them to high Degrees: But a Perſon Born within the proſpect of a Throne, who never ſubmitted, and yet is Submiſſion its ſelf; in a word, who holds nothing of an ordinary Education, but holds all from the greatneſs of his Blood and the Example of the Gods, cannot without a great alteration of the common order of things, partake of ſo great and unworthy an Action. It is not then that I am diffident of the ſincerity of your Promiſes, I have not hearkned unto them, but that I imagine to ſee them exceeded by their effects; but as I am ſenſible of my unworthineſs, diſpence with me if you pleaſe from accepting any thing then the Glory to have ſerv'd you; from an action of free Will, I ſhall make it a Mercenary one, if I pretend to any thing further. I know very well, that I ſhould have offended you, ſaid the Prince, had I offered you any thing belonging to me beſides my Heart, ſince that would be paying an extream generous Act with an extream piece of Baſeneſs; but offering you that at firſt, that is to ſay, my moſt ſincere Affections, give me ſtill the liberty to offer you all that may remain

main in my power; I cannot make you a preſent of the firſt, without preſenting you with all that depends upon me. That if nevertheleſs you content your ſelf with my Friendſhip without any thing elſe, receive it pure as it is, and do not refuſe me yours. With thoſe words renewing his Embraces, he obliged the ſtranger to render him the like, which notwithanding he put an end to, to ſpeak thus to him. The Gods know the endeavours I would make uſe of, ſaid he, lawfully to acquire that which that Liberality offers me without having deſerv'd it. Then ſhould I accept of it with extraordinary Acknowledgments, becauſe I ſhould then hold my ſelf aſſured, that you had not beſtowed that favour upon me without Juſtice. But when I conſider that with you I have the quality of a ſtranger, I fear that when you ſhall know me more particularly, leſt you ſhould as ſoon paſs from Eſteem and Affection, to Hatred and Contempt. *Alcanor* ſtopping him at thoſe words, be aſſured, ſaid he, that for the future, nothing can happen to hinder me from Eternally Loving of you. Make attempts againſt that Life which I enjoy by your Courage, make me looſe the favour of my Prince; procure me the Hatred of the Gods; in a word, raviſh from me the Affections of *Prazimene*, which would be the moſt ſenſible and greateſt of all my Misfortunes; I might well complain thereof; I might accuſe the rigour of my Deſtiny; but it will never be in my power to hate you. *Meliſtrate*, cryed the ſtranger, what muſt thou do now, ſhall't thou accept of what it is neceſſary for thee to refuſe? To what double Captivity has fortune reſerv'd thee; thou doſt already acknowledg'd one Conqueror: And nevertheleſs, ſee here a Second Victory which they would obtain again over thee; but a Victory which cannot ſimpathize with that other where thou didſt ſerve for the Triumph.

Theſe

Theſe words were no ſooner in his Thoughts then at his Mouth, at one and the ſame time; inſomuch that he pronounc'd them in a Tranſport, which he would afterwards have been glad to have conceal'd; it is true, that they were ſpoke ſo quick that the Prince heard them, without conceiving the ſenſe of them. At length, as if he had given himſelf the leaſure to interrogate himſelf upon the reſiſtance which he made to accept of a Friendſhip ſincerely offered, he remained ſome time without ſpeaking, when on a ſuddain, yes, great Prince anſwered he, I am ſenſible how unworthy I am of ſo high a Favour; and nevertheleſs I receive it, ſince you will honour me with it; that little Courage which fortune made appear to you, ſhall no more render you any Service by Accident for the future, it ſhall be through Inclination and Duty; nevertheleſs ſuffer that in an Union ſo little ſuitable, I always ſuſpect my defect without having any diffidence of the truth of your Promiſes. It is undoubtedly your Opinion, that after ſo many proteſtations, *Alcanor* was deſirous to know the Original and Fortune of the Stranger, and it is true, fair Princeſs, but he had but juſt begun the Diſcourſe, and I think had not proceeded therein much further then to tell his Name, when the Queen hindred the continuance thereof: She entred into the Princes Chamber, and holding me by the Hand, drew near to his Bed, with thoſe Attendance which was moſt familiar. I do not ask you, ſaid ſhe, to him, how you find your ſelf ſince the King has told me, that there wanted nothing but the eyes of *Prazimene* to compleat that Recovery, therefore ſhall not doubt but that you are in indifferent good terms; you ſee that I have brought her to ſee that if the Judgment which his Majeſty hath made, may have ſucceſs, and if her Eyes can contribute with the Phyſitians for the re-eſtating

ſtating you in your former Health; I bluſh'd at the hearing of thoſe Words, and it was very well ſhe ſpoke as ſhe did, for otherwiſe I ſhould have bluſh'd altho' ſhe had ſaid nothing: The Perſon I perceiv'd in the Prince's Bed, putting me in mind of thoſe Diſturbances which he had occaſioned, had always cauſed that effect. *Alcanor* receiving the Queens Viſit, with Words and Actions anſwerable to the Honour ſhe did him, intreated her to try his Recovery by ſome command which might require a ready Obedience, and that then ſhe might ſee that the Grace and favour ſhe did him, was the utmoſt and Soveraign Cure for his Wounds; but do not content your ſelf, Madam, continued he, to work this Miracle on me alone, extend it, if you pleaſe, on this generous Friend, ſhewing the Stranger, to the end that I may have nothing of a Wound in my Mind, after the entire Recovery of my Body. It was then that by an eloquent Anſwer, and ſubmiſſions full of Charms, the Stranger verified the Opinion which already had been conceived of him. To ſay the Truth, he ſometimes made miſtakes, and I obſerved that it never hapned ſo to him, but when I had ſaid ſomething, or that my Eyes had met with his; but he retreiv'd himſelf again, with ſo much Wit and Addreſs, and his Anſwers were the more agreeable becauſe he endeavoured to Joyn what he anſwered unwares to what he ought to have anſwered ſeriouſly.

At that inſtant what a violent Combat the Diverſity of my Thoughts made in my mind, and how neceſſary it was for me to diſſemble, not to make my preſent confuſion appear: At length the Queen being upon her Departure, thereby ſatisfy'd to the utmoſt of my Deſires. All the while I was near her, all her Diſcourſe was in Praiſe of the Stranger: She, I ſay, who ſince ſhe was become the Eſpouſe of the great *Ninus*, met with

but

but common Virtues in the reſt of Men, had a particular eſteem for this ſtranger, and ingeniouſly confeſt, that that mixture of Courage, Youth and Beauty ought to paſs for one of the Rarities of the Age: and would to the Gods that ſhe had reſted there, and that from that innocent eſteem ſhe had not fallen into a Criminal Paſſion; at leaſt the infamous Diſorder which has ſince accompanied the Injuſtice of her Deſigns, had not made a univerſal Confuſion; and I ſhould not at this time regret the loſs of the deareſt part of my Self; *Nimus*, you would be ſtill among the number of the Living; *Meliſtrate!* faithful *Meliſtrate!* alas, where-ever thou art, thou wilt not have that mortal Regret which hurries thee to Deſpair, and your Country, fair Princeſs, would enjoy that Repoſe and Glory which ſo many abominable and tragical Inventions have raviſh'd from it. There *Prazimene* giving her ſelf leiſure to wipe her Eyes, which ran down with Tears continually, was in doubt whether ſhe ſhould go on with her Diſcourſe concerning her Adventures, or remit the ſequel of it untill the morrow, but being ſenſible at laſt that the Princeſs of *Bactria* endeavoured to comfort her, only to underſtand more of the Circumſtances, ſhe thus continued, The Queen, of whom I came from ſpeaking, and who will be the eternal Cauſe of my Tears, was not content with what ſhe had ſaid to me about the Stranger, her curioſity extending further, ſhe ſent to enquire of the Prince *Alcanor*, if he knew any thing concerning his Birth. They brought her word back again that his Name was *Meliſtrate*, and for the reſt ſhe could learn no other thing, but that he was a young Soldier of Fortune, who being more Generous than Illuſtrious by Birth, ſought all occaſions to make that remarkable and eſteemed, which the Heavens had beſtowed upon him: That is pity, anſwered ſhe,

that

that the Perfections which ſhine ſo bright in his Perſon, have not a higher beginning; He might boaſt that he might ſee abundance beneath him, but very few above him, I could have wiſh'd that her Majeſty had not been ſo inquiſitive, or at leaſt that that Anſwer had been made in my Abſence, at leaſt the incertainty wherein I was, had continued, and I had thereby receiv'd a greater Satisfaction. I was indeed in doubt whether his Extraction was extraordinary, and I oppos'd thoſe Sentiments which ſometimes would appear favourable for him, upon that Conſideration; however, whatever arguing I made to my ſelf, it was always a doubt towards the which I was but too willingly inclinable; but as ſoon as I heard that his Birth did not agree with ſuch excellent Qualities; that was a freſh ſupply of force to encounter the ſecond endeavour, which it came from making, and had an equal Succeſs with the former, when thinking ſtill on him, I obtained over my ſelf the Victory. I ſhall not ſay that the Converſation they had with the Queen and me, was the laſt Remedy which cured them; nevertheleſs I ſhall not forbear aſſuring you that ſoon after that Favour on *Semiramis*'s Part, the two Wounded Perſons were in a Condition to quit their Chambers; the one was never to be found without the other. and whatever Viſit *Alcanor* made, *Meliſtrate* was ſure to be one; the King careſs'd him mightily; the Queen gratified him in an extraordinary manner; In a word, all the Court, as well to render to his Virtue what was his due, as not to diſagree with their Soveraign, by whom he was mightily eſteem'd, gave him infinite Praiſes, nevertheleſs the moſt intereſted Perſon ſpoke but with moderate Applauſe, altho' their Sentiments exceeded thoſe which were publiſh'd by every one; I need not tell you how often he came to ſee me, under the Notion

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of accompanying the Prince, in whoſe Affections he ſtood the ſecond; as the Recital would tire you, ſo likewiſe it would be concealing from you one part of my Adventures, if I omitted to inform you of thoſe Viſits, which I muſt make uſe off in my Diſcourſe. I remember, that from the very Day that they quitted their Bed, after the Gods and their Majeſty, I was held to be their moſt agreeable Company; they found me in my Chamber in the midſt of a profound Solitude, in which the Prince ſurpriz'd me, and not him that accompanied him. If when the ſimplicity of Habit had robb'd this unknown of that good mine which the eclat and advantage which pomp and Magnificence adds to it, and that notwithſtanding I had plac'd him above the Rank of the moſt aimable of our Court, where could I range him when he appeared to my Eyes, courted with Gold, Pearls, and Diamonds, I cannot tell it to you, Madam, ſince I became ſo ſurpriſed and troubled, that every thing went out of my Memory; *Alcanor* having paid his Reſpects to me preſented this wonderful Stranger to me; behold him to whom I am owing for my Life, ſaid he, and who has preſerv'd it to me only, that I may execute that glorious Deſign, which renders it dear to me, and which is to employ it in your Service, as you have already conſented that I ſhould. Without him, Madam, the Vows I have thereupon made, had been to no purpoſe, and by his means I ſee my ſelf in a better condition to accompliſh it then ever: Altho' I was not altogether come to my ſelf, yet I made a paſſable Anſwer to the Civilities of the Prince, and beſtowed ſome affectionate Thanks on the Strangers Courage, and what he anſwered was ſo to the purpoſe, that in my Life, I never heard any thing ſo charming; I obſerv'd that during the time of the Viſit, he was under an extream conſtraint, ſo much was he afraid, leaſt by ſome action ill managed, *Alcanor* might come to underſtand

ſtand that his Friend was become his Rival. I obſerv'd, I ſay, by divers Alterations of his Countenance, upon which I caſt my Eyes ſometimes privily, the greatneſs of his Deſires and Reſpects; but I did what I could to conceal from him that had perceiv'd it: We liv'd after this Rate for ſome time, meeting often at the Queens, often in the Walks, and ordinarily in that Company, whether the Prince never went without him, and nevertheleſs he met with no favourable opportunity to entertain me in particular; it was not but that ſome did offer themſelves, but as he was very Wiſe and Judicious, he let them all paſs, obſerving them to be too ſhort for to undertake to diſcover himſelf in, which he could not do in few Words. For my part, who did not make uſe of ſo much circumſpection, and who every time thoſe moments preſented themſelves, had expected that he would declare himſelf, conjectured from thence, that I had been miſtaken by Appearance alone, and that *Meliſtrate*, altho' infinitely generous, yet had never had the boldneſs to raiſe his Thoughts to me. Then, Madam, I began to be grieved, and as the firſt Opinion had made me judge him to be inſolent and bold, ſo the ſecond made me eſteem him fainthearted. Nevertheleſs, *Alcanor* undertook ſome publick Gallantries; and the King, whoſe Affection toward him was encreaſed, by what he had taken off from *Malcolmate*, did not only conſent to it, but likewiſe honour him with his Advice in all that was propos'd to him; the fineſt place in *Babylon* had right to claim that Quality, not only becauſe of its great Extent; not only becauſe of its magnificent and ſtately Buildings, which incompaſs'd it; not only likewiſe becauſe of its agreeable Situation; but alſo for the Riches which are there to be ſeen, and the Wonders which are there occaſioned by the beauty of the

Ladies,

Ladies, and the generality of the Cavaliers, and I believe, from a kindly Design, his Majesty made a private Compliment of it, to the end that the general Congratulation of so Illustrious a Spectacle coming to the Knowledge of the gentleman *Melisbrate*, in what part soever he might be, Interest have been, it might excite him to Valour, hearing that that great Excellency was in Company of *Alcanor*, [illegible] who glorying in nothing so much as in the Glory of his Mistress, was the Object of his Affections, wore [illegible] my Colours, and took no Motto [illegible] not only of Intelligence; but his Actions [illegible] took upon him those which were [illegible] culer, which nevertheless he [illegible] he had reason to carry them, [illegible] which I affected; the Device was [illegible] my Joys at with that of *Alcanor*, but although it might seem extreame different, still it had the same signification. The truth is, that without knowing his Thoughts, it had been hard to have been understood; but as he has since confest to me the great desire he had and the [illegible] to satisfy his Passion as well as his [illegible] made him so industriously hide his Intentions under that Device, which he alone was capable of explaining. Those magnificent doings lasted for two Days, as likewise the glory thereof was participated between two Persons; *Alcanor*, by the courtesie of *Melibrate*, obtained all the Advantage which an excellent and experienced Cavalier could hope for; I say by the Civility of *Melibrate*, because it was well known to every one, that he had spared himself the first Day on purpose not to render the Princes Triumph less glorious, by the diversity of Opinions, which the Bravery of his Cautions would have caused, had he not refrained them; but when he might, (as often he would) it was with so good a Care, and those Tryings were so just, that they were rather taken

for the effects of his Address, then his want of Experience. If any one doubted thereof, the next Day, when *Memor* resign'd him his Place, they were soon convinc'd, since those who effay'd against the Prince, disputed the Victory with him, but could not stand before him, but rather seem'd to present themselves before him, only soon to have the Honour of being overcome. Whilst every one made appear their admiration by their Expressions, that their Majesties should say, that they could not believe but that the Stranger must be beyond what he pretended, and that Envy began to Creep into the Breasts of a great Number. Whilst the Victorious *Melifrate* was near the receiving from my Hand the prize design'd for the Victory, and that my Heart was in Motion to accompany him in his Triumph, a Courier arrived who put an end to those fine Actions; the News which he brought made most People believe, that these diverting Combats had been the prefages of more serious and bloody ones which were going to follow them, since the Revolt of *Assyria*, the News of which that Courier brought to our Monarch, invited to Arms all those who made profession of them. That great King being unwilling that that News should interrupt on a sudden the Diversions, ordered them to be continued unto the same Hour, as the day before they had ended, when every one retired content to the utmost with what they had seen; but *Melifrate* more Lucky'd them all the rest, having beheld himself crowned by my hand. Scarce was the Council met to resolve upon the Revolt of the *Assyrians*, but another arrived, giving an Account of the Invasion of *Babylon*, that our Monarch had confined at Ninive, whither he sent him, when his generous Queen would accompany him. Neither he nor his Council could believe that that Prince had made his escape

escape without the Governors being of Intelligence with him; nevertheless, whether it were that it was not a proper time to fetch out the truth; *Ninus* made none of his Suspicions appear, altho' they always remained with him; only the Opinion was general, that the Revolt of *Armenia*, and the Invasion of *Assyria* were Effects proceeding from one Resolution, and that whoever had practic'd the Revolt of that Province had likewise procured the Liberty of its Prince, to the end that the People might more willingly throw off the Yoke, seeing their Prince to [illegible] head of the Design, to regain them their [illegible] ty. It was concluded then, not to [illegible] those Rebels to acknowledge him, and [illegible] purpose it was resolv'd immediately to [illegible] Army against them. *Memnon*, whom the [illegible] would prefer before all others, was the Person on whom he cast his Eyes for the Management of that War; and he being present at Council, was no sooner named, but that after thanks returned for that Honour, he believed the great *Ninus* to give him Assistance for his Enterprise. That Request affronted all Persons, and not one believed that it ought to have been agreeable to his Majesty, since it not only put the Fortune of *Assyria* to hazard, but likewise scandaliz'd abundance of ancient Officers to whom that charge did lawfully belong, when it should be granted without any repugnance. In truth it was an extraordinary thing to repose so great a charge on a Stranger, who might as soon be of the [illegible] side, as any other, and nevertheless there was not so much cause of Admiration, since it is common with Persons whom the Heavens design for Heroes, never to arrive to their Degree but by extraordinary ways. *Sarsis*, a Town on the Confines of *Mesopotamia*, not far from *Nineveh*, was the place of Rendezvous of all the [illegible] ard

and there were already enough to form the body of an Army able to act offensive when the Prince received his last Orders to depart. *Holstrate* having us'd his Power, not to accept of a charge of which he owned himself unworthy, found that neither his Youth, upon which he more particularly grounded his refusal, nor all other Circumstances which he alledg'd would excuse him from it; insomuch that confounded with so wonderful a change, he propos'd to himself to give the Lye to those who declar'd that they did not expect any great Success from his Conduct, and to deceive the others who were not of the first Opinion, by actions more signal and celebrated than those of which they might conceive some hopes that was not his only design, speaking of which he had a thousand times resolv'd, but never had had the boldness to execute, followed, or to say better, preceded; that was, no longer to conceal from me, what Respect and Friendship had enjoyn'd him to forbear. An opportunity offered it self the same evening before his departure; *Mauny* came upon receiving the Princes commands and accompanying her in the Walk which she would take in those Stately Gardens, that Cavalier confiding me. *Semeuse* being a little at a distance to say something to the Prince; he took his time, seeing we were far enough not to be understood by any, & saw him open his mouth to speak, but I saw him suddenly change Colour, (they I believe, said I (without saying ill to the Lake) and suddenly laugh'd at the Accident) that the utmost range of the danger which you imagining here should have more power over your mind, when the danger is felt; not so Madam, pursued he, will you please, but rather the pursuit of an Enterprise of Consequence, if you esteem your Honour, (cut) my apprehensions (said I) there you threat-

threat-

threatned with some other danger? Oh! Gods! may well say that our loss is greater than any can happen to you here, which is dear common to us all, and that we ought not to lament for any misfortune, since he, who alone is capable to defend, may fall the first into the danger. The danger in which I find myself engaged, he, whose strength alone, is sufficient, [illegible] ought not to apprehend it but my self, [illegible] himself pursued by a world of Enemies, and to have no hopes but on the other side of a Precipice, which in its self contains all that can be dreadable, most dangerous, and most to be [illegible] though he fall; and [illegible] it is enough, and I will obey Heaven's Will, and [illegible] this Commandment to [illegible] that is [illegible] Princess, I shall [illegible] which [illegible] Enemies & pursuit [illegible] from [illegible] fall of Tenerky, where I pass [illegible] and if my [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] it [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

for as if that word was to be the end of his Eloquence, he stopt on a sudden, as soon as he had pronounc'd it; but then also as if it had been a Charm for me, I was not in a condition to make him any answer, for my mind being struck with contrary Sentiments, had entirely lost its power, as to make me pay any attention to that Lover, as to make me know how surpriz'd I was to know that he Lov'd me contrary to my last thoughts, and what deal of confusion did that assurance beget in me. I should have been very willing to have made appear to him that his Love was not displeasing to me, and yet on the other hand, I [illegible] been willing to have [illegible] for I was incapable to retrieve [illegible] and the next moment I repented [illegible] Thoughts, though the confidence of my virtue in that word I wish'd my self [illegible] for the sake of Neliphate, and yet [illegible] I would not have ceas'd to have been [illegible] end, that I might Challenge the [illegible] Desires. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

for; as if that word was to be the end of his Discourse, he flopt on a Sudden, as soon as he had pronounc'd it; but then also as if it had been a Crime for me, I was not in a condition to make him any answer, for my mind being disturb'd with contrary Sentiments, had reduc'd me to that point, as yet unto me past my Comprehension, how surpriz'd was I to know that he lov'd me contrary to my last thoughts, and what deal of confusion did that assurance beget in me. I should have been very willing to have made appear to him that his Love was not displeasing to me, and yet on the other hand, I found myself unwilling to have [illegible] I was incapable to retrieve it [illegible] and the next moment I repent [illegible] Thoughts, through the consideration of my birth, in that word I wish'd my self younger [illegible] for the sake of *Nelly Jones*, and yet [illegible] I would not have seem'd to have been [illegible] end, that I might Chastize the [illegible] of his Desires. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] I closely observ'd him, and was [illegible] touch'd, and nevertheless after a long conflict I strove to overcome my self, to condemn [illegible] made him this Answer, [illegible] [illegible] of your Favors? and do you dare hope [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

an infinite number of Enemies, and that covered all over with blood and Wounds, he found but Death, without being able to move with it, he had just routed a great Party which lay in Ambush, and which had not Orders to appear, but in that heat of the Combat; when about eight hundred Horse [illegible] wounded, and mixed themselves and charged all the Army to him; that he was incapable of commanding any orders, caused in him a great deal of Grief, but little of no Confusion; he was so much accustomed to conquer that loss, [illegible] that [illegible] the Prince [illegible] his natural Courage [illegible] and [illegible] whom the Wounds of their General, had weakned and rendred dead-hearted. Whatever great number were [illegible] Majesty, ought they to be [illegible] with this remembrance; that when [illegible] that [illegible] rebell from [illegible], and pursuing [illegible] way, killed so great a number of them, that their Head Quarter serv'd them to return again the [illegible] finding himself oblig'd through the dangerous condition, wherein the Prince was, to [illegible] Army, he review'd the Army, which gave him to understand that the report was greater than the Truth; and not to rest upon the diligences [illegible] he would take no repose, till he had put all things in order, as the necessity did require, and till he had relieved *Alcanor*. That Prince having no part about him free from the marks of the Enemy, assured [illegible] had [illegible] so dangerous, that putting his [illegible] in doubt, at least where Cæsar would [illegible] [illegible] in the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

all hopes; insomuch that having receiv'd from Cæsar abundance of necessary Instructions in few Words, for that it was not permitted him to speak much: He made them take the most compendious way they could to that City. It was with wonderful Resentments: that he protested, not they but himself, but upon this consideration all his Revenge, that if the fortune of the War, without which the most generous Conquerors endeavours in vain, should sometime favour him, he would not receive the peace, but only to make them to know, how much they should one day long for it. [illegible] Cæsar [illegible] Cæsar [illegible] Cæsar

dull it was by representing to my self his last Discourse, when less cruel in effect then in appearance, I gave too secure an Answer to the inamorable declaration of his Love. Believe, fair Princess that the frequent remembrance of it altered my Humour, and that those sweet and agreeable Conversations, which had always been my delight, began to be troublesome; yes, certainly it was in solitary Retirements, for which before I had an Aversion, because they created Troubles and Uneasiness, which are Enemies to Beauty, whilst I found my company; where I endeavoured [illegible] Grief, there I [illegible] to agreeable to me, that I [illegible] to all the Divertisements in the World. The Queen was the most ready to perceive that Alcidalian, [illegible] as he believed, as well as all the Court, that Alcidor was the Subject of my Thoughts, for imagin'd that the melancholy which appeared in my Face, proceeded from the [illegible] of my Humour, and that which was almost indifferent to me, took it for a favourable presence to secure me from [illegible] One Day, when I was alone in my Chamber, and that being [illegible] even to Excess, I [illegible] which wearing [illegible] Breast Chamber, I fell on his Countenance, [illegible] in his Deeds and all over in a Sweat, through diligence having found the Door open, [illegible] without Civility. I did not at first know [illegible] after having beheld him, the [illegible] interrupted did not him [illegible] self. Oh! how [illegible] the [illegible] how [illegible] Celadon I was to know the occasion

occasion of his Voyage, I had not the Courage to ask him, and whatever endeavours I made use of to rise from the Place where I was, I found my Legs as unable to support me, as my mouth was to speak. Madam, said he, be not surprised that I have the presumption to present my self before you with so little respect; The Joy which I am going to have, has so stun'd me, that I have no knowledge for my self, you must not take it ill if I no longer remember what I owe to others. I have not, however, forgot Fair, but too lovely Princess, continued he, believing still that I had not known him, that I am that Polexander, whom fortune is so strictly join'd to the Service of the glorious Mirtilvard, who since that Hour, wherein in your presence I had the Honour to fight him with Sword in Hand, in the Gardens of the Palace, I should have thought my self separated from my self, if I had not always followed his footsteps. Will you not find it strange then, that at present, being distant from him, and perhaps Fortune never to see him more, I do not observe exactly those Humanities which should be sons of my Condition ought to appear before you? no, Madam, you will pardon my Grief, and permit me this; there drawing forth a Paper which he kiss'd several times, he continued, these are writ in Blood, which will [illegible] you the cause of my Tears, and which in [illegible] testifies to your Highness, with how much Obedience of a Prince, and [illegible] pair has caus'd to perish. [illegible] such would [illegible] put me here [illegible] great pains to have made my [illegible] my Tears, my Countenance [illegible] my [illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible]

At length, after this mournful exclosy, which did not last long, but which made appear to the doubtful *Palmedon*, that I was not that insensible *Prazimene*, for whom *Melisbrate* would die, I took the Letter which he still held; and all wet with a cold Sweat in trembling, I opened: Most certain I know not how it came about that I did not Relapse into those Accidents from which I was but just recovered, when I beheld the Characters, they were of Blood, and the Pains with which they were formed were visible, by the inequality these appear'd to be throughout the whole. Gods! cry'd I, give me but Judgment enough, and Courage withal to read this most wonderful Letter, at length, forcing my self as much as it was possible for me, I read these Words, which will never escape my Memory.

Melisbrate to *Prazimene.*

REduc'd to the Terms of pleasing you for the future, the happy words will inform you by what means I pretend to become agreeable to you, refuse them not, your perusal, since you will thereby understand the Accomplishment of some one of your Desires, needs must the rash design of writing to you entred into my Thoughts, if the condition wherein I find my self, did not excuse the Liberty; I take it then, Madam, in behalf of those Criminals, who think to abate the rigour of their Crime, when after having blasphemed against Heaven, they addresse themselves to Heaven, praying to pardon for so doing; in like manner having offended you, it is of you my adorable Princess from whom my Prayers would obtain that I might die in peace. I accus'd my self, as soon as I had rendred my self guilty, you have condemned me, and I submit, that you, having given Cause unto [illegible] by the Lips of a Blind Divine, and that,

through

[illegible] Maid was the cause of its Misery, you [illegible] are the point of losing [illegible] [illegible] ready to die, and upon one [illegible] [illegible] depends my Happiness or Despair: Pronounce it if you please, but pronounce it in my favour, consider that if the Satisfaction is not equal to the Crime, at least there can be none greater than Death itself: I shall receive it with all my Heart, and shall not be afraid to follow it, only to know, if your justice pretends to any thing further; I shall ever continue to be with content, if that be contented, whereas if that is not satisfied, the Grave cannot put an end to my Grief and Sorrow.

He's not Dead then, said I, more rejoyc'd at the end, than at the beginning of that Letter; No, Madam, answered the afflicted Palmedon, but he will soon be dead. Is there no Remedy, added I, to save his Life. No, continued he, renewing of his Tears: But pursued I, if the means has been found out to prolong it to him until such time as he can hear from me, I ought to believe that he is not mortally wounded, since it will be impossible to defer his Death for many days as your Journey requires. It's true, Madam, unfortunate Palmedon, that he is not mortally wounded, nevertheless it is impossible that he should live; he has permitted his Wounds to be taken care of; but to preserve it until he has received it from my Mouth the Pardon which I am come to demand of you for him; as soon as I shall have told him the Success of my first Endeavours, the design is to hinder the continuation of Remedies, without the assistance of which, he must undoubtedly Perish; and if I should command him to live, and let him know how much I owe to his Despair, I interrupted him, [illegible] with [illegible] her will live [illegible] Palmedon, and when I did assure you [illegible]

[illegible] stand in need. But Melandre do not [illegible] my Condition [illegible] to your desire, [illegible] but learn'd the last accidents of my Fortune, if I was not afraid to tire you by a too long Conversation; the finest recitals become very disagreeable when the recital goes beyond a certain term wherein the Ear rather languishes then Listens; for a stronger reason ought my Discourse to be troublesome, failing in that Beauty which it ought to have. That nevertheless, if your patience is not tired, nor your curiosity glutted, I am ready to pursue [illegible] my Adventures as soon as the Tears which the remembrance of a Prince who Loves me ought incessantly to draw Tears from my Eyes, will give me the Liberty: No, Madam, interrupted Melinde, I shall not pretend to lay any constraint upon you, it is enough to have engag'd you in a Discourse which cannot be pleasing to you, since it renews your Grief, without obliging you to renew [illegible]

Tears which are in ease to you, let them flow; therefore at full Liberty, and if they [illegible] Consolation, minde those, which [illegible] wherewith you have touch'd [illegible] you. This refusal nevertheless is [illegible] defect that your civility can attribute [illegible] course, there is too much of Attr[illegible] Charms, and your Fortune is too [illegible] cool my Desire of hearing them, or [illegible] Attention; so far from that, it [illegible] how much I esteem it, since remitting it to [illegible] ther time, it is to lay a restraint upon my [illegible] in order to have another time a longer Enjoyment. That answer did not put an end to their Conversation; some other Discourses were [illegible] them, at the end of which the Princess [illegible] thes of of her Maids to come to wait upon her [illegible] ximus. They were no sooner entred, but [illegible] with'd her the good Night, and then retiring [illegible] another Chamber in her Pavillion, he went [illegible] take his Rest.

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